IBM PC Workout • Arcades Of Hollywood $2.50

ELECTRONIC FUN

with COMPUTERS AND GAMES

ICD08274

OCTOBER 1983 VOL. I NO. 12

RULE THE WORLD!

Strategy Simulation Game Roundup

Reviews:
Pole Position
Safecracker
Decathlon

10

0 74820 08274

Look what we have in store for your Atari.

Arti Haroutunian has done it again.

The mind behind our first Atari® success, *Kid Grid*, has just dreamed up another one: *Juice!*

And if you don't think that's electrifying, consider what the experts are saying.

Electronic Fun with Computers and Games says that *Kid Grid* "may sound like kid stuff, but it isn't. Even on the slowest setting ...the game is quick enough to challenge almost anyone."

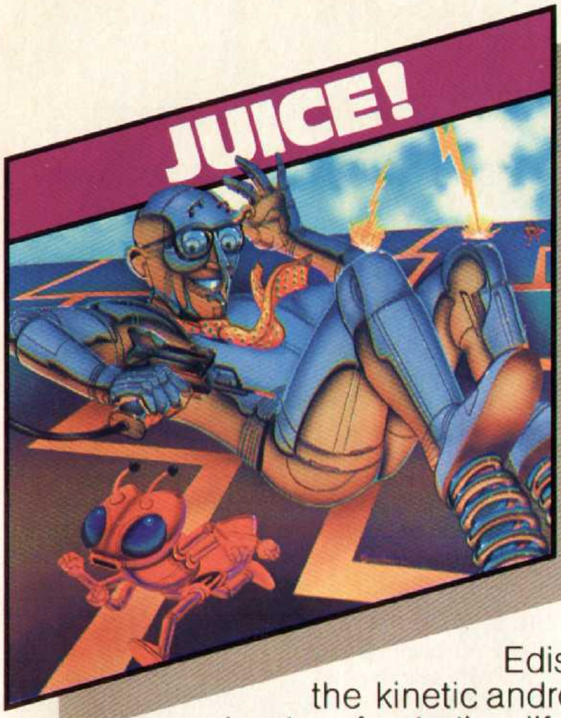
That's right. And that's not all.

Electronic Games calls the Kid "Hypnotic, appealing, fast-moving arcade action of the highest calibre, ...one of the most compulsive, utterly addictive contests in the world of computer gaming."

We couldn't agree more.

What will the critics say about *Juice!*? Will they like its colorful graphics, superior sound effects, charming characters and challenging play patterns?

Why wait around to find out?



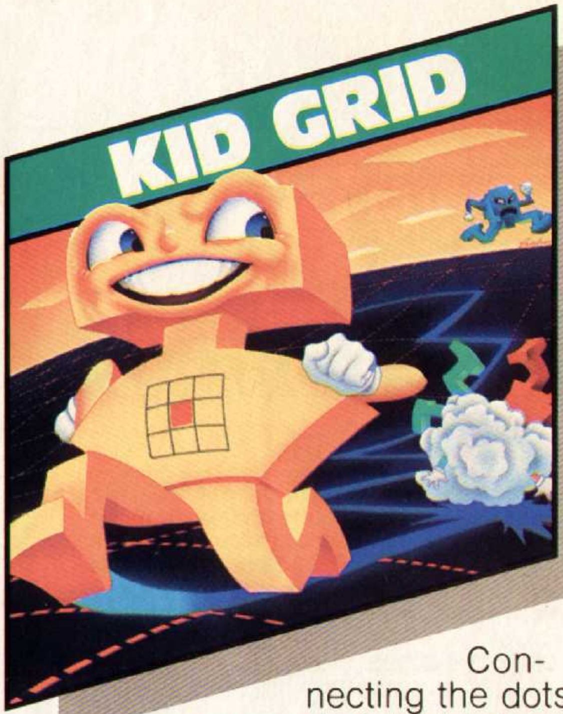
Edison, the kinetic android, leads a frustrating life.

All he wants to do is build his circuit boards and go with the flow. But things keep getting in the way.

Nohms—a negative influence—bug him constantly. Flash, the lightning dolt, disconnects everything in his path.

And the cunning Killerwatt is out to fry poor Edison's brains.

You'll get a charge out of this one. And a few jolts, too!
(Requires 32K memory. Suggested retail $29.95)



Connecting the dots on our colorful grid should be easy, right?

Wrong. Because the bullies are in hot pursuit!

Squashface, Thuggy, Muggy and Moose are their names. And *you* are their game. And what's more, they're faster than you are.

But you're smarter. And you control the stun button.

So keep your eyes peeled for the mysterious question mark and don't slow down at corners!
(Suggested retail: $29.95)

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Available on diskette or cassette for your Atari 400, 800 or 1200 computer.

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VOLUME ONE, NUMBER TWELVE • CONTENTS • *OCTOBER 1983*

ELECTRONIC FUN
with COMPUTERS AND GAMES

Special Reports

THE UNKNOWN ARCADER: THE ARCADES OF HOLLYWOOD *By "UA"* Hollywood is the home of the movie stars. That much we already know. But can it also boast more video game stars than there are in heaven? Our man puts on his shades and Hawaiian shirt and goes in search of those whose footprints deserve to be in cement in front of the Ultimate Arcade ... **44**

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FIRST SCREENING You can either land safely on the lunar landscape or be chewed out for destroying a rather expensive rocket ship in Art Cestaro's *Lunar Lander* for the Atari. But no matter what you do, you've still got to stand up for the *Star Spangled Banner* at the end ... **85**

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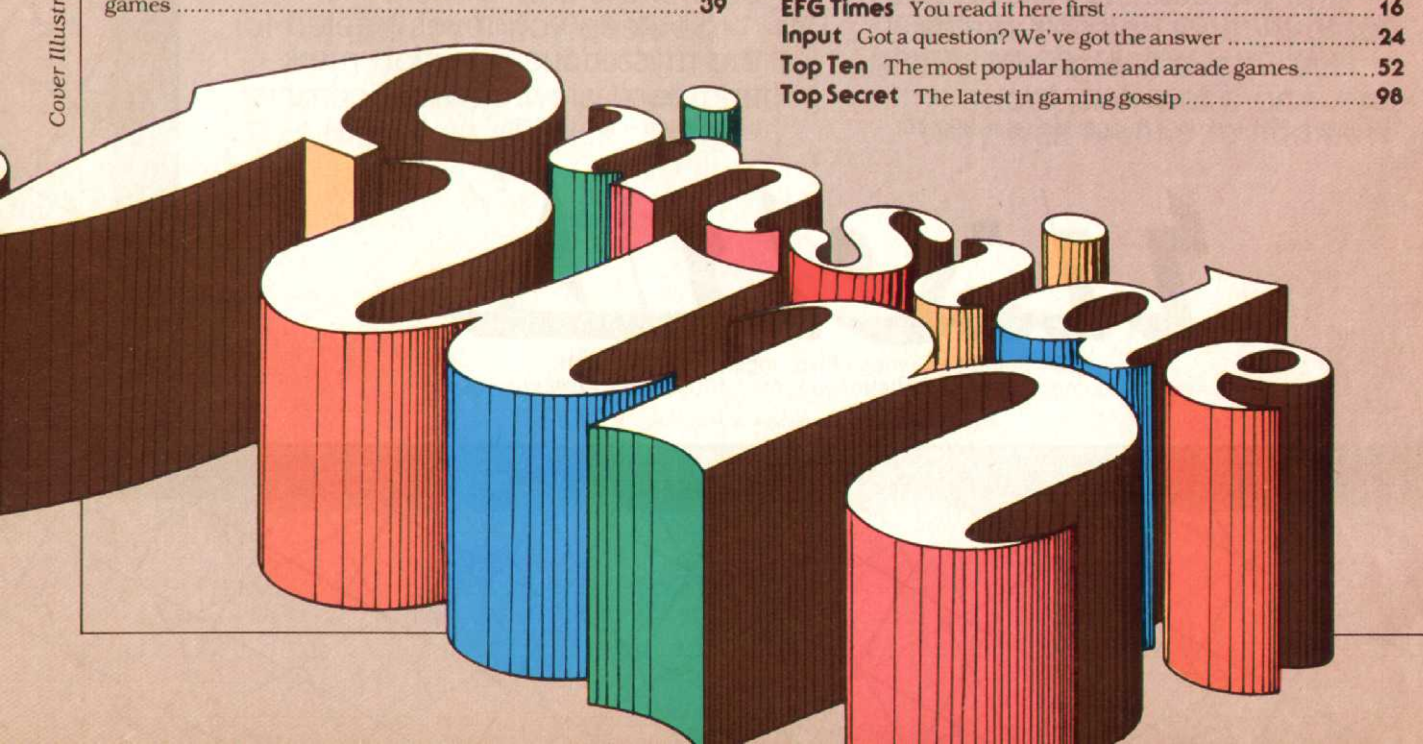
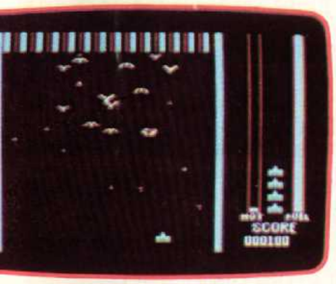
Cover Illustration: Greg Couch



VIC-20
VIC-20

"YOU WON'T BELIEVE YOUR EYES"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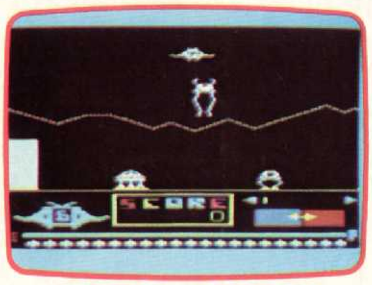
THRESHOLD,™



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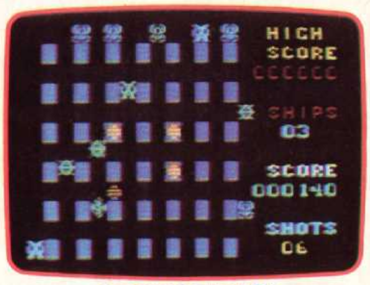
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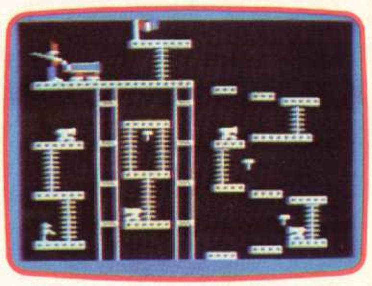

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Editorial

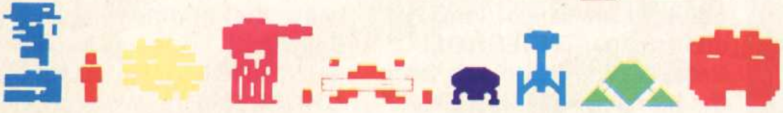
Rule the world by computer

We still haven't seen a game that simulates putting out a magazine, but we wouldn't be surprised if someone was working on it. The biggest trick would be to adjust your mental clock three months ahead and try to predict how many things you write about as gospel would turn out to be lies by the time the magazine got into print. Anyway, there are a lot more interesting pursuits to simulate, and you can read all about them in this month's issue—everything from flying a 747 to saving the world from a virus from outer space.

The responses to our Hall of Fun *awards are pouring in. If you haven't filled out your ballots yet for video and computer games you still have time—but barely. Don't put it off another second! The winners will be announced at the Electronic Fun Expo to be held at the New York Coliseum from November 3 through 6 and one lucky reader will be flown by us to witness this event. This will be the biggest game and computer event of its type ever, so if you're going to be in New York then, don't miss it. By the way, we'll have a feature story on our* Hall of Fun *winners in the December issue.*

As I mentioned earlier, we're working months ahead, and we've got some terrific articles planned. Look forward to our feature on artificial intelligence, probably the most exciting area of computer research going today. We'll also be telling you the inside dope on those products you'll never see, and why not. As you probably know, 1983 has been a rough year for a lot of video game and computer companies—a lot rougher than expected—and products that looked like a good idea a few months ago don't look so good anymore. You also won't want to miss our special 1984 issue. Big Brother With Computers and Games is watching you!

The Editors



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After you remember not to forget what to remember, you can't forget to remember what you remembered not to forget.

INTRODUCING

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The Bally/Midway™ arcade memory-twister you can play at home.

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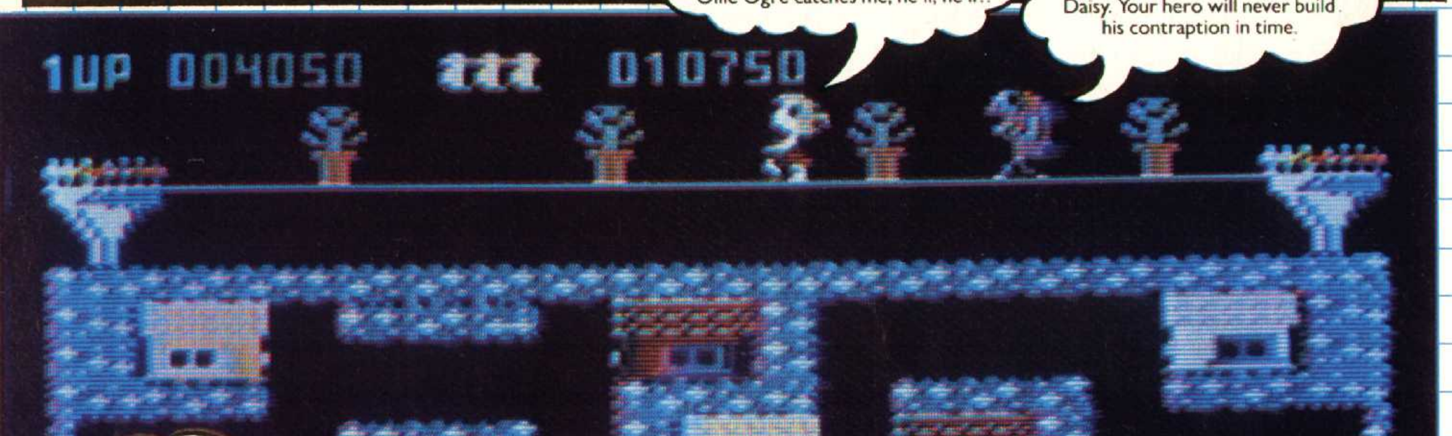
Well, our new BLUEPRINT didn't forget a thing. It's just as nutty at home as in the arcades, whether you play it on your Atari® 2600,™ 5200,™ 400/800/1200XL™ or Mattel Intellivision.®

See for yourself. And don't forget to remember not to forget to send in the coupon for up to $20.00 in CBS Electronics arcade game cash rebates!


Don't forget to rescue me. If Ollie Ogre catches me, he'll, he'll..
Forget about getting rescued, Daisy. Your hero will never build his contraption in time.
1UP 004050
010750
Says you, Ollie!...
I have to remember which houses had the parts to my contraption...get rid of a bomb every time I make a mistake...
stay out of the clutches of my arch-rival Fuzzy Wuzzy...
START
THE BLUEPRINT
MONSTER
FASTRUNTIME
PIT
and put my contraption together in exactly the right order. Now you'll pay for chasing my girlfriend, creep!

Shown on Atari® 5200™

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3. To qualify for the cash rebate by mail, all of the above items must be sent in their original form. No reproductions will be accepted.
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5. Offer limited to one $5.00 rebate for each cartridge purchased up to $20.00 and limited to one $20.00 rebate per household, address, or organization.
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Limit one $5.00 rebate for each cartridge purchased up to $20.00. This certificate must be accompanied by your *cash register receipt and the UPC symbol* found on the back of the cartridge box. This offer expires Oct. 15, 1983. All requests must be received by Nov. 1, 1983.

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Another quest for fire (buttons)

WICO

The Boss Joystick $19.95

Everyone likes Wico controllers—they're sleek, arcade quality and good looking. But not everyone can afford Wico controllers. Perhaps this is why the company decided to bring out a new line of game controllers priced more within the average video gamer's budget. According to Wico, The Boss joystick is the only popularly-priced joystick on the market today that features professional-style components. This means that even a component as sophisticated as a high-quality PC board with five built-in leaf switches is included in The Boss. Clearly, Wico doesn't believe in sacrificing quality just to lower the price. The Boss is made of durable, high-impact plastic. Additional features include a comfortable, ergonomically-designed grip handle which, says Wico, was engineered to fit both "hand and mind." There's also a thumb-action fire button. And for those of you who don't like holding your controllers in mid-air, Wico has very considerately attached four non-skid rubber feet which stick to any table top surface. What's more, there's a five-foot cord so you don't have to play your favorite video games with the television right on your lap. The Boss comes with an extended limited warranty and is compatible with the Atari 2600, the Atari 400/800 computers, Sears Video Game systems and the Commodore VIC-20 and 64. Wico plans to expand The Boss line to include other professional-quality game controllers.

Wico
6400 W. Gross Point Road
Niles, IL 60648

SUNCOM

TAC-2 Joystick $19.95

It's been said that the bigger something gets the smaller it gets. This is proven by the ever-shrinking computers, calculators, etc. Suncom, however, is of a different opinion. They feel that smaller joysticks are not suited to bigger hands. Enter the TAC-2, a joystick that is made to fit larger hand sizes. The Atari-compatible TAC-2 has a larger base, longer cord and cone-shaped joystick throw limiter. It comes with dual right- and left-handed firing buttons.

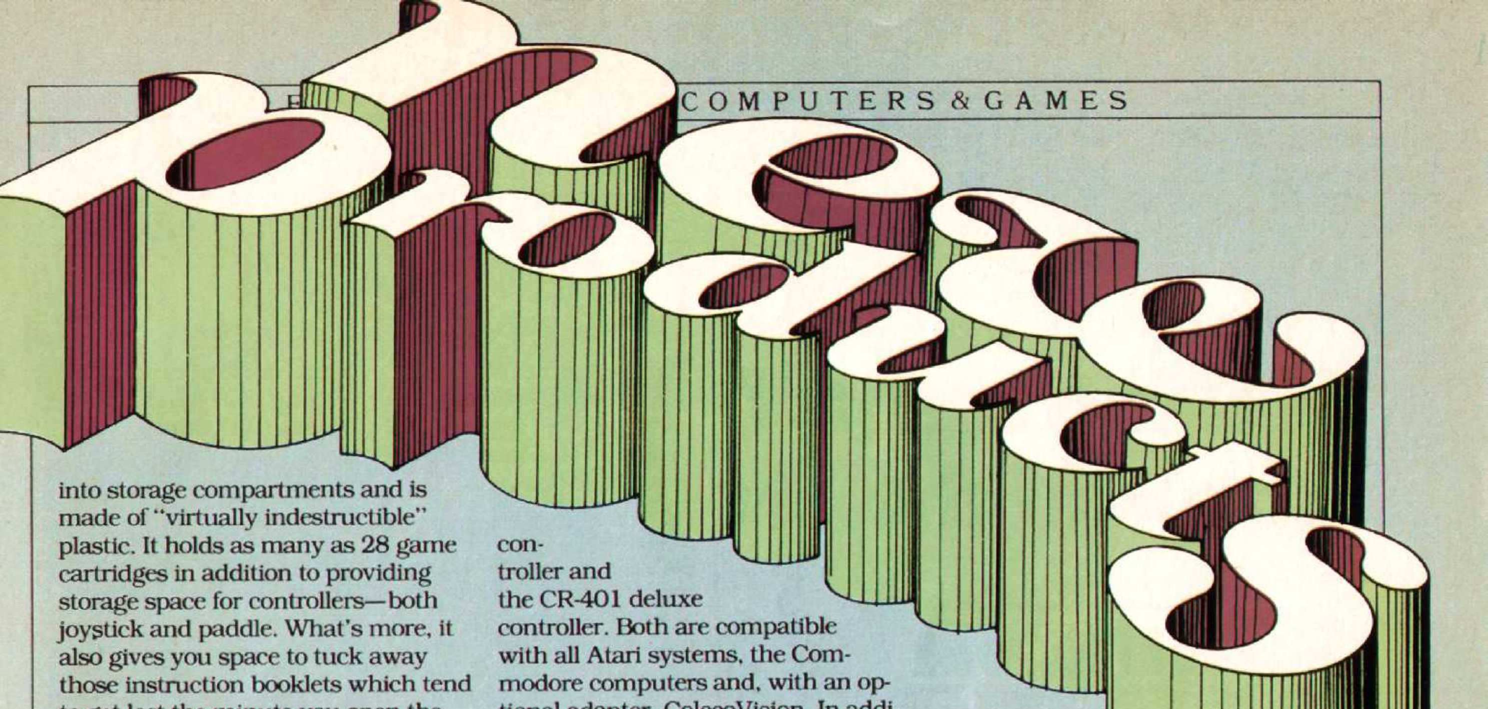
Suncom
650 Anthony Trail, Suite E
Northbrook, IL 60062

NIELSEN PLASTICS

Video Game Space Case $24.95

A place for everything and everything in its place. That part is easy. The tough part is figuring out what place is for what. Thanks to Nielsen Plastics from now on you'll never have to ask, "What's the right place for my game system and cartridges?" The answer is the Video Game Space Case. The Space Case is a storage system and game base into which your Atari 2600 fits like a glove. It has a translucent dust cover, hidden handle and protective rubber feet. The Game Base is sectioned off

CHECKERS
NIGHT DRIVER
PITFALL!



into storage compartments and is made of "virtually indestructible" plastic. It holds as many as 28 game cartridges in addition to providing storage space for controllers—both joystick and paddle. What's more, it also gives you space to tuck away those instruction booklets which tend to get lost the minute you open the boxes. And that's not all—there's room for accessories and a place to coil all those messy, unkempt-looking wires that clutter up everything.

Nielsen Plastics
1380 Third Ave.
New York, NY 10021

COMREX INTERNATIONAL

ComMander Joysticks $19.95 (CR-301) and $44.95 (CR-401)

A lot of companies that started out making accessories and peripherals for computers thought that disk drives, circuit boards and language cards were where the action was. Little did they realize that joysticks were the coming thing. One company that knows is Comrex. A leading supplier of peripherals for personal computers, Comrex recently unveiled its new line of ComMander game controllers. The new joysticks come in two models—the CR-301 standard controller and the CR-401 deluxe controller. Both are compatible with all Atari systems, the Commodore computers and, with an optional adapter, ColecoVision. In addition, the CR-401 ComMander fits the Apple and Franklin computers and will fit the IBM PC, Radio Shack TRS-80 and QX-10 computers in the near future. According to Comrex, the deluxe model is the first to provide analog control for the Atari 2600 and the first to be compatible with both high-performance computers as well as the VCS. The deluxe model also features trimmable X and Y axes.

Comrex
3701 Skypark Drive
Torrance, CA 90505

ARCADIUM CREATIONS

Universal Video Arcade $198

You've got a computer, a video game, a TV set, a bed, several posters of David Bowie, a small refrigerator, several reptiles and a stereo/tape deck in your room. Everything, right?

Everything except an arcade game but your pocketbook simply can't afford the billions and billions of dollars necessary to purchase the one you want. What do you do? Spend $198 and buy the video arcade from Ward Enterprises. The video arcade turns your home system into an arcade-like system by housing all the units in a sturdy, upright arcade-style game cabinet. Designed for stand up play, the arcade's game and TV panel is slanted to permit better visibility and is pre-drilled to accept controls for Atari, Intellivision and Odyssey as well as most other major game systems.

Ward Enterprises
405 23rd St.
Jackson, MI 49203

Making scents & status of the art

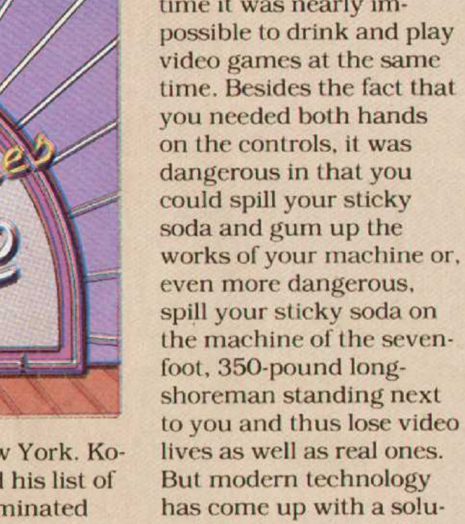
the Mikado
Heeerrrres Ko-Ko

Q*Bert and Sullivan

Few things have remained untouched by video games. Everything it seems, has been touched in one way or another—breakfast cereals, sneakers, politics, etc. You would think, however, that the classics at least would not be tampered with considering they were written way before circuit boards were invented. But noooo. *The Mikado* has been tainted and Gilbert or Sullivan or both are probably rolling over in their graves. *The Mikado* is an operetta about living and loving in feudal Japan. In it is this character named Ko-Ko who is the Lord High Executioner. He keeps a long list of things he is staunchly against. Well, a modernized production of this show was mounted this year in New York. Ko-Ko has updated his list of things to be eliminated and among those objectionable things is "the video arcader who's a *Pac-Man* specialist." The updaters missed one opportunity to change another song in the same show—*Three Little Ghosts From School Are We* was not included in the production.

Cool No Hands Luke

People have always been advised against trying to do two things at once. For example, never drive and read a book at the same time, don't juggle while performing delicate brain surgery and never bleed while wearing expensive designer clothing. Modern technology has contributed its share of these don'ts, too. For a long time it was nearly impossible to drink and play video games at the same time. Besides the fact that you needed both hands on the controls, it was dangerous in that you could spill your sticky soda and gum up the works of your machine or, even more dangerous, spill your sticky soda on the machine of the seven-foot, 350-pound longshoreman standing next to you and thus lose video lives as well as real ones. But modern technology has come up with a solution for the problem it created—the Cangaroo Cooler beverage holder. Not only does the Cangaroo Cooler hold your soda in a specially designed pouch which hangs around your neck, it also keeps the drink cool while leaving your hands free to do other important things such as take down phone numbers or hold a drink.



The Seven Deadly Syntaxes

EXCUSE ME
PLEASE...

No matter how intimidating personal computers might be, one thing you can say about them is that they aren't critical and they don't make a practice of ridiculing you because of your own particular background. Whether you were from the hills of Tennessee or a direct descendent of the Cabots and Lodges never mattered to a CPU. About the harshest thing a computer would say to you was "syntax error" and even that was stated in a non-incriminating tone. That, of course, was before artificial intelligence came along and ruined everything. There's a new program out that makes computers so human that they can detect which social class you're from. The program takes a letter typed by your typical US resident and critiques the style, syntax and construction. Although the immediate use for this program is to help managers correct "inap-

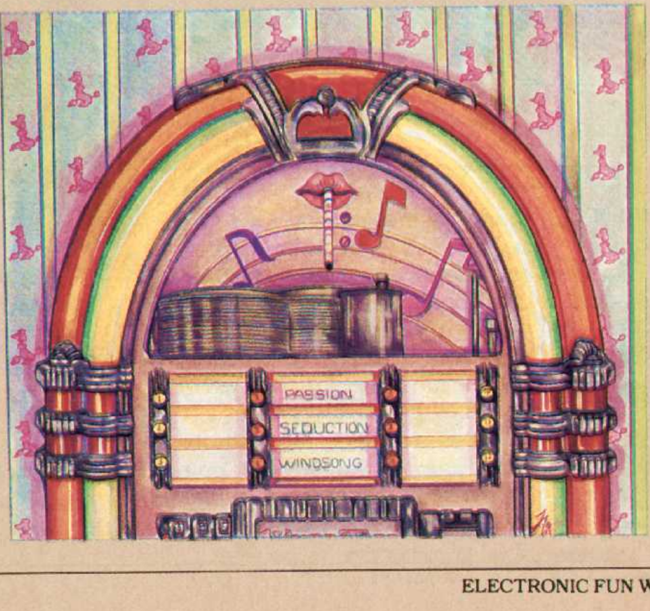
Glitches

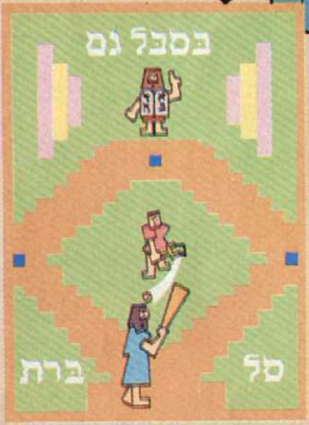
GET OUT
OF DA
WAY...

propriate writing style" one possible future application could be to determine whether someone should be allowed to join the Yale Club or wear Lacoste shirts.

Inde-scent Exposures

We've got records to record great music and we've got videodiscs to record great sights, but there's at least one sense that's been sorely neglected—smell. Until now. Thanks to Charles of the Ritz, you'll be able to play smells as you would romantic music. How will this be done without using messy and potentially dangerous incense burners? With a small electronic device about the size of a Kleenex box. Called the Aroma Disc system, the new machine works like this—you insert a "fragrance record" into it and the scent is released when the oil-filled discs warm up inside the little box. Scents available will include Riviera, Gentle Breeze, Holding Hands, Passion and Seduction. The discs will come in both long-playing versions that put out the same odor for five hours (price $4) or 45's that play for an hour ($1.50). The company's experts have created something for everyone—there's Medi-Scent for the hypochondriacs among us and Neutral for those who want to smell nothing. This of course will inspire K-Tel to put together collections so that in the near future we can expect to see such scented discs as *The Greatest Smells of the Fifties* and *Top Ten Colognes of Your Favorite Composers.*





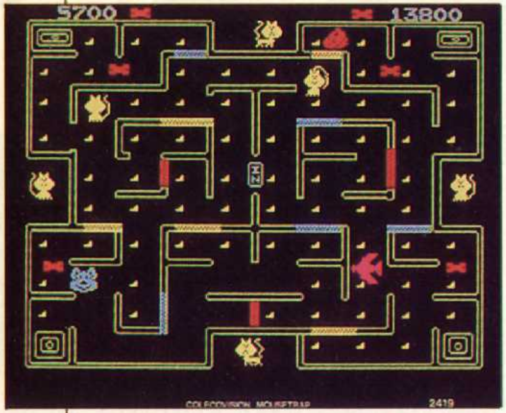
Talmudisk Scholars

"Did Moses play baseball and, if so, what position did he play?" This may not really be one of the questions that appears on *Jewish IQ Baseball* but you get the general idea.

The game educates students in many areas of Jewish knowledge by posing questions. Correct answers get you singles, doubles, triples and home runs. *Jewish IQ Baseball* is only one of the games available from Davka Software, a firm which specializes in Jewish software for many computers. Other games include *The Game of Jericho* in which you help Joshua destroy the walled city and *The Israel Geography Game* in which you must call upon your razor sharp detective skills to deduce and name cities in Israel. We're waiting for a couple of games that really perpetuate the stereotypes we've all grown to know and love. For example, *Yom Kippur* in which all sorts of tantalizing foods fly past you and you've got to resist temptation; *Frogs* in which you've got to move the 12 plagues of Egypt across a busy highway and, finally, *Jewish Mother*, a voice synthesized game which makes you feel guilty for not being married at your age.

Illustrations: Pat Kinsley, Bill Silbert, Thomas Newbury, Thomas Newbury, Bill Silbert.

Letters to the editors



SCREENS DON'T LIE?

I was reading Mark Brownstein's review in *Hits & Missiles* of the Atari 2600 version of *Mousetrap*, and got annoyed that he would use a picture of the ColecoVision version without any warning to the readers. Raymond Dimetrosky did the same thing with Atari 2600 *Football*, using either the 5200 *Football* or a 400/800 computer football screen picture. As far as I'm concerned, this is both unfair and misleading to your readers, who happen to be as much dependent on honest graphics as honest reviews.

Harold Bonet
Bronx, NY

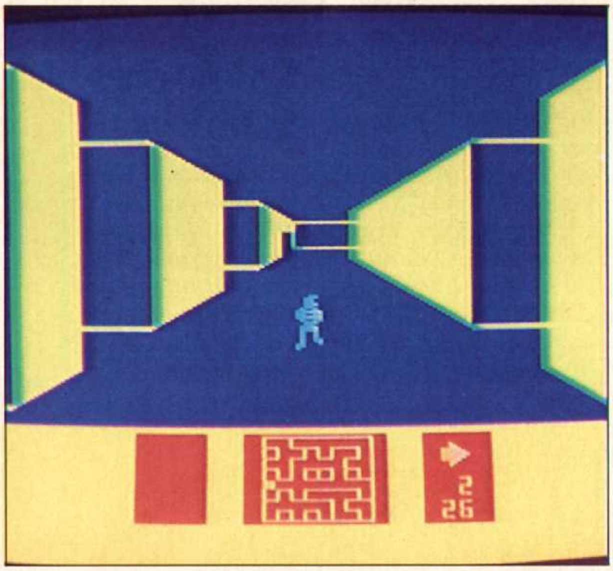
You're quite right, Harold—we did run the wrong pictures with the reviews. Nice of you to blame the writers for the editors' mistakes.

THE REVIEWER'S LIFE

Please tell us how much your reviewers play a game before deciding yea or nay. Do they put in long hours on each before handing out the joysticks? I'm worried that the very complex ones suffer if only played a bit. For example, I was ready to throw the three latest Starpath games away after an hour at each—the incredible complexity of *Escape From the Mindmaster* and *Dragon Stomper* stumped me into thinking the games were dogs. Now I can't put these games down.

Nicholas A. D'Orazio
Wilmington, DE

We do several things to insure that every game gets a fair shot at four joysticks. We give our reviewers an average of four weeks with a game before they hand in a review of it; we never assign more than two or three games to the same reviewer during the same month; and we insist that they become fairly proficient at the game before deciding whether it's any good or not. We also try to match different types of games to reviewers with different tastes—no cute or whimsical games get reviewed by deadly serious wargame fanatics, for instance. Any review is still only an opinion, of course—we just try to make sure that it's an informed opinon.



ACTIVISION
SPIDER FIGHTER
VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE
FOR USE WITH THE
ATARI VIDEO COMPUTER SYSTEM

CHEAPER GAMES?

I have noticed that the games you can order out of this magazine are cheaper—like *Spider Fighter*. I saw it somewhere for $29.99, but here they are $23. Why? Also, I really dig your magazine. It keeps me up to date on the things that are happening.

James Dillon
Marysville, CA

In answer to your question, James: We just figure some of our advertisers are super salesmen.

FLYMAIL

Dear Mr. Fly: Talking dollar bill changers make you barf. X-rated arcade games make you barf. Atari's "secret handshake" makes you barf. Guess what makes me barf.

Eric Somer
Midland, MI

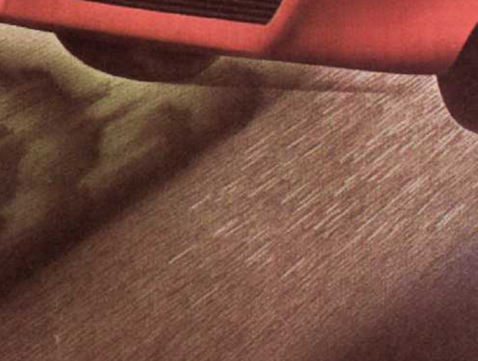
Don't be so rough on The Fly. Maybe it was something he ate.

COLECO PAC-MAN?

I have a ColecoVision and have been wondering if they're going to come out with a *Pac-Man* for the Coleco. I've been reading your

BUMP 'N' JUMP.™* THE VIDEO GAME FOR PEOPLE WHO SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO DRIVE.

For those of you who spend more time crashing than you do driving, we'd like to introduce Bump'N'Jump. The home video game where it's not just okay to hit the other cars, it's required.



Shown on Intellivision. Game varies by system.

Your job is to crash as many cars as you can without crashing yourself. And to help you do it, you're given some unusual options. Not only can you bump them off the road, you can jump over what you can't bump.

But even with these advantages, you're not on easy street. Because waiting somewhere down the road might be the deadly dump trucks. Or the treacherous tanks. Or the sinister death car. When you play Bump'N'Jump, you just never know who you'll run into.

Coming soon for Intellivision® and Atari® 2600.

Bump'n'Jump™*

FROM MATTEL ELECTRONICS®

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magazine and haven't seen or read anything about this—and I'm sure other kids are wondering the same thing. (P.S.: I love your magazine.)

Kevin Nichols
and Shane Benbrook
Searcy, AK

Coleco isn't planning to release a Coleco Pac-Man *cartridge for two reasons: (1) Atari owns the home game rights to* Pac-Man*; and (2) you can already play the Atari VCS* Pac-Man *on your ColecoVision by using Coleco's Expansion Module #1. The first reason wouldn't necessarily prevent Atari from putting out a Coleco-compatible* Pac-Man, *but the second reason makes it highly unlikely that they will.*

FREE SCREENINGS

My favorite part of your magazine is the readers' programs in First Screening. It costs so much to get a program for a computer, and your programs are great! Are you going to have them in all your future issues?

Chris Johnson
Tucson, AZ

Yes, we are. We may even expand the section to include more than one program, if enough readers request it.

TOKEN COLLECTOR

Whenever I go to an arcade, I keep a token from it—by now, I have several. If you know of anybody else who does this and would be interested in trading, could you have them write to me? My address is 1204 St. Andrews Way, Baltimore, MD 21239.

Chris Roberts
Baltimore, MD

ANOTHER TRADER

I got an Atari for my birthday and I wanted a ColecoVision. Would you know anyone who lives in Florida who might want to trade with me? I have 12 carts: *Star Raiders, Venture, Megaforce, Yars' Revenge* and others. Could you have them write to me at 719 Grove Street #3, Saint Petersburg 33701. Thanks.

Bobby Yordy
Saint Petersburg, FL

MORE FIRSTS, PLEASE

Regarding the April editorial asking people to comment about whether you should expand First Screening or not: I think you should. I have learned a variety of things from reading First Screening and think that lots of readers would learn and enjoy the column much more if it were bigger. One more thing: I think your magazine is the best of all.

Bryan Goldner
Tucson, AZ

ATARI COMPUTERS

While reading the April issue, I was intrigued to find that two companies were working to produce a 16K home computer to plug into the Atari 2600. I would appreciate any more information you could provide and/or the addresses of both Entex and Unitronics. Congratulations on having the finest publication in the computer and video games area.

Robert Caroti
West Haven, CT

For more information on the Entex 2000 and Unitronics Expander systems—the two computers you mention—see "The All-Purpose VCS" in our July issue. You can also write to Entex Industries Inc. at 303 West Artesia Boulevard, Compton, CA 90220, and to Unitronics in care of Unitoys Inc., 401 Grand Avenue, Oakland, CA 94610.

Write to us! We can't promise that we'll answer every letter, but we will read them all. We welcome your comments, advice and questions. Send your letters to: Electronic Fun, *350 E. 81st St., New York, NY 10028*

Sirius Is GIVING AWAY Over $35,000.00 In VIDEO GAMES!!!

You Can Win A Sirius Game OF YOUR CHOICE!

Correctly answer the questions below to qualify for the FREE GAME DRAWING.
Enter all of the Grud Quizzes and qualify for all 20 drawings!

GRUD QUIZ #1: BANDITS

1. **Can you destroy a Menace while it is flying up?**
2. **How is shield energy gained?**
3. **Do the shields protect your ship from Napalm Bombs?**
4. **What do Carriers drop?**

TO ENTER:

Just send a postcard or 3 x 5 piece of paper to Sirius containing the following information:

1. Your name and address
2. The Grud Quiz number and your four answers

RULES:

1. All entries must be handwritten and individually mailed.
2. All entries must be postmarked by midnight, February 29, 1984.
3. Only one prize per person per quiz is permitted.

1,000 WINNERS!

If ALL of your answers are correct you will qualify for that Grud Quiz drawing. 50 winners per quiz will be randomly chosen and notified by mail on or before March 31, 1984. Each winner will receive a complete Sirius catalogue listing from which they can select the game or games of their choice.

LOOK FOR MORE GRUD QUIZZES in the Oct., Nov., and Dec. issues of your favorite computer magazines or at participating software retailers.

ALL CONTESTANTS WILL RECEIVE A FREE FULL COLOR SIRIUS COMIC CATALOGUE

Sirius™

Sirius Software, Inc.
10364 Rockingham Drive
Sacramento, CA 95827

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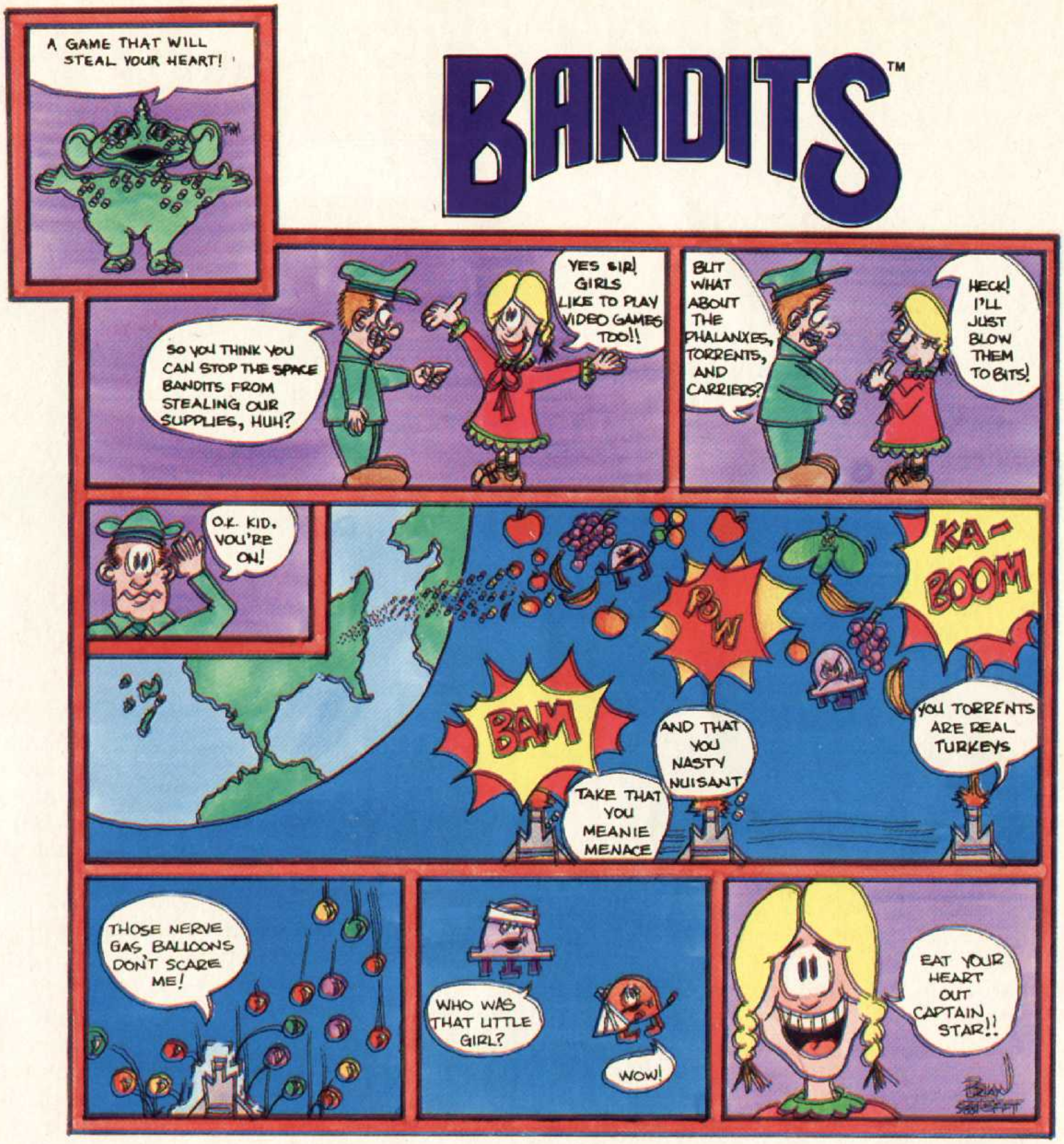

A GAME THAT WILL STEAL YOUR HEART!
BANDITS™
SO YOU THINK YOU CAN STOP THE SPACE BANDITS FROM STEALING OUR SUPPLIES, HUH?
YES SIR! GIRLS LIKE TO PLAY VIDEO GAMES TOO!!
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE PHALANXES, TORRENTS, AND CARRIERS?
HECK! I'LL JUST BLOW THEM TO BITS!
O.K. KID, YOU'RE ON!
KA-BOOM
POW
BAM
AND THAT YOU NASTY NUISANT
YOU TORRENTS ARE REAL TURKEYS
TAKE THAT YOU MEANIE MENACE
THOSE NERVE GAS BALLOONS DON'T SCARE ME!
WHO WAS THAT LITTLE GIRL?
WOW!
EAT YOUR HEART OUT CAPTAIN STAR!!

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Sirius™

For more information contact your local Sirius dealer or contact Sirius directly at 10364 Rockingham Drive, Sacramento, CA 95827, (916) 366-1195.

Game design by Tony and Benny Ngo.
VIC-20 version programmed by Leonard Bertoni.
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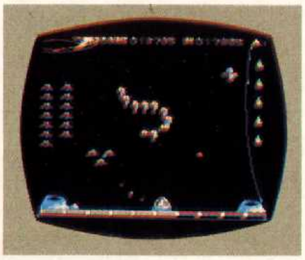
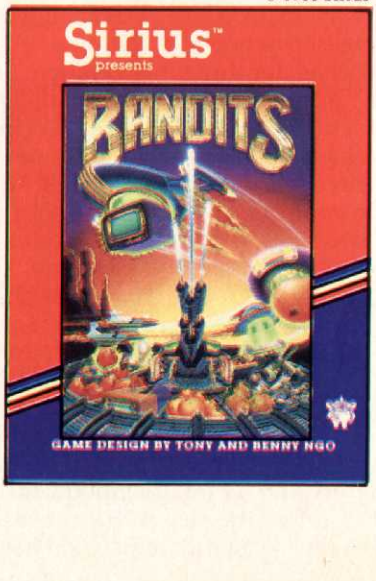


Apple II, II+ & IIe Disk
Atari 800 & 1200 Disk
Commodore 64 Disk
VIC-20 Cartridge


Sirius™
presents
BANDITS
GAME DESIGN BY TONY AND BENNY NGO

E.F.G. Times

VOLUME ONE, NUMBER TWELVE

OCTOBER, 1983

CALLING ALL GAME DESIGNERS

Jay Acton and Peter Skolnik of the Software Agency.

We just know all our readers are teeming with great ideas for computer games. But where do you sell them? And, even more importantly, how? The competition is stiff and getting a major—or even a minor—company to look at your submission when it receives dozens (or hundreds) of submissions daily, is next to impossible. Unless you have an in. But then the question comes up: How do you get an in? In at least two ways, that's how.

First, you can get an agent. In fact, there's a new agency just formed to handle all you aspiring video and computer game designers. Called the Software Agency, Inc., it's run by Jay Acton and Peter Skolnik. For a fee, they'll represent your original and exciting game ideas and present them to software manufacturers. For further information call Jay or Peter at (212) 675-5400 or write to them at 825 Third Ave, New York, NY 10022.

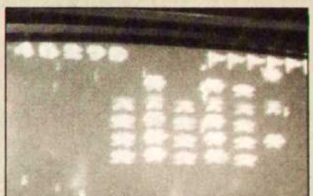
Second, you can join the National Association of Freelance Programmers which publishes *The Software Market Letter*, a monthly newsletter for all members. In the newsletter is information and advice pertaining to software marketing. You don't have to be a published software author to become a member. All you have to do is send a check for $48 to NAFLP Box 813P, Vienna, VA 22180. This membership fee includes a subscription to *The Software Market Letter*. Good luck and good booting.

MONTHLY CONTEST

The winner of the July Contest is Jeffrey Kovach of Lowville, NY who scored 46,920 points on the Atari 5200 version of *Galaxian*. Congratulations, Jeffrey.

You will all no doubt remember that we said that both the VCS version and 5200 version were acceptable for the July Contest and that we would award two prizes—one for each machine. Well, gang, we're only awarding one prize. Why? Because no one (not a soul) entered a score that had been racked up on the 2600. We only received 5200 entries.

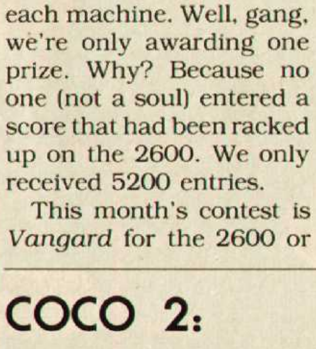
This month's contest is *Vangard* for the 2600 or 5200. We really want to award *two* prizes so be cooperative this time! The winners will receive the cartridges of their choice. Send a clear photograph showing your high score



to: October Contest, *Electronic Fun*, 350 East 81st St., New York, NY 10028. Entries must be postmarked no later than Oct. 15. Be sure to put your name and address and to tell us which cartridges you want in order of preference.

COCO 2: INSTANT GAME

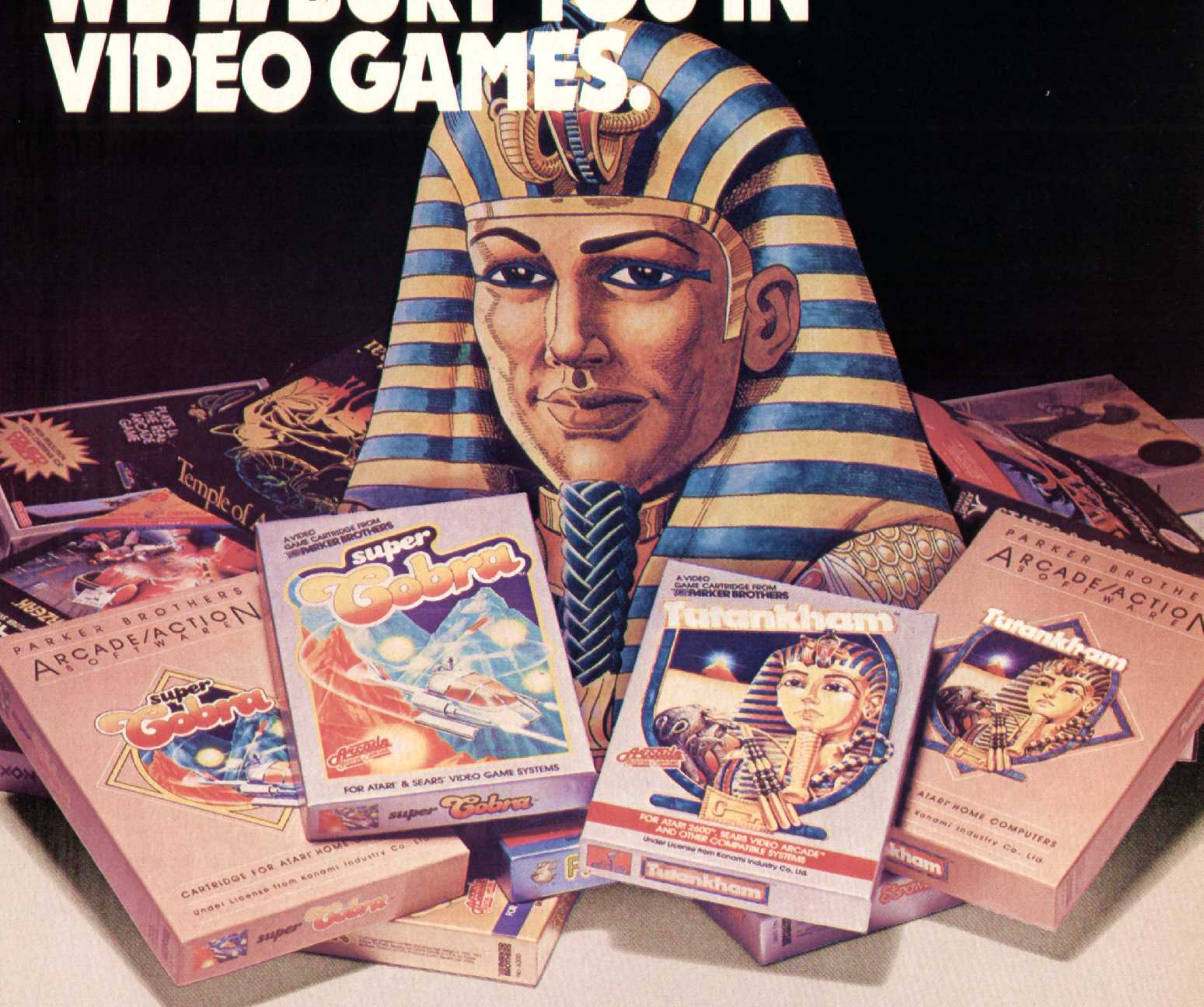
Want to design your own games? HES' *Coco 2* teaches computer users the basics of computer game design—no programming knowledge required. The *Coco 2* player follows a fully developed sample game and then chooses from a variety of colors, objects, sound and weapons to develop a totally new game. Priced between $40 and $45. *Coco 2* is available for the VIC-20 (with 16K), Commodore 64, Atari 400 (with 32K) and Atari 800 computers.


COCO 2
THE EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER GAME AGES 9-90
Write your own games, see how its done, and play your own games with your friends.
For use with Commodore VIC 20

Quote of the Month

"I feel as if I've been around at the dawn of a new age, like Henry Ford in 1904. So long as we don't blow up the world, there's so much you can do with computers and electronics, I don't see the end of it."—
Broderbund Software Cofounder Gary Carlston

FIGHT THE PHAROAH, AND WE'LL BURY YOU IN VIDEO GAMES.


Temple of
A VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE FROM PARKER BROTHERS
super Cobra
FOR ATARI & SEARS VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS
PARKER BROTHERS ARCADE/ACTION SOFTWARE
CARTRIDGE FOR ATARI HOME COMPUTERS
Under License from Konami Industry Co. Ltd.
Tutankham
FOR ATARI 2600™ SEARS VIDEO ARCADE™ AND OTHER COMPATIBLE SYSTEMS
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ATARI HOME COMPUTERS
Konami Industry Co., Ltd.

Tutankham™ brings you the sweepstakes you've waited 3,000 years for. You could win the grand prize of $3,000 worth of video games or video equipment, or one of 100 Super Cobra™ video games, or one of 2,000 "I Fought the Pharaoh" t-shirts.

You'll battle the deadly Guardians of Tut's tomb. The farther in you go, the tougher it gets. And on level four, you'll face the ferocious Mystery Guardian. Will you be one of the first to identify it?

Enter now. A sweepstakes like this comes along only once in a dynasty.

Available for the Atari 2600™ and Intellivision™ systems. Coming soon for all popular video game and home computer formats.

No purchase necessary. See entry form for rules. Hurry. Sweepstakes ends December 31, 1983.

®PARKER BROTHERS

NO PURCHASE REQUIRED. HERE'S ALL YOU DO:

1. To enter, complete and mail official entry blank or a 3" x 5" piece of paper with your name, address, and zip code.
2. Enter the sweepstakes as often as you like, but each entry must be mailed separately to:

Tutankham Sweepstakes
Post Office Box 508, Lowell, IN 46356

Entries must be received no later than December 31, 1983.

3. Winners will be selected in random drawings from among all entries received by VENTURA ASSOCIATES, INC., an independent judging organization whose decisions are final. The odds of winning are determined by the total number of entries received.
4. No duplicate winners. No substitution for prizes as offered, except as may be necessary due to availability. Taxes are the responsibility of winners.
5. Sweepstakes open to residents of the United States. Employees and families of Parker Brothers, their advertising and production agencies and VENTURA ASSOCIATES, INC., are not eligible. Void where prohibited by law. All Federal, State and local regulations apply. Winners will be asked to sign an affidavit of eligibility and their names and likenesses may be used for publicity purposes.
6. For a list of major prize winners, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Tutankham Sweepstakes Winners List, Post Office Box 754, Lowell, IN 46356.

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

Name ______

Address ______

City ______ State ______ Zip ______

MYSTERY GUARDIAN: ☐

Not required for valid entry.

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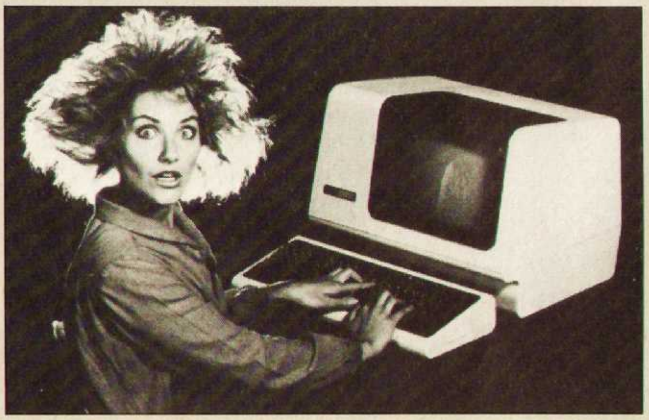
Hair Raising Caption Contest



Your caption here.

At last, *EF* is going to do something for you, namely a contest that takes brains, not manual dexterity. This is a contest for all you wise guys out there (and we know you're out there—we read the mail). Here's the challenge: Caption the above strange photograph in the funniest way you know how using 10 words or less (the less the better) and mail it with your name and address to Photo Contest, *EF*, 350 East 81st Street, NY, NY 10028. The judge's decision will be based on the number of minutes the editors are reduced to a mass of quivering jelly by the given caption. The winner will have his or her caption printed in the magazine and will receive a year's subscription to *EF*. Entries must be postmarked no later than October 15 and must be on a postcard. We're cracking down this time: Entries not submitted on postcards will not be considered.

Department of Corrections

In the June issue we gave you a list of all the companies that made games for the Commodore computers. At the time, that was all but between the printing of that list and now, at least one more company has sprouted:

Softplus Softplus has one game for the Commodore 64 but plans to issue several more for the same system. The game is *Metro Madness* and features 3-D meteor showers which speed recklessly through space. There are 47 levels of complexity and a Challenge level. Available on both disk and cassette, it sells for $29.95 (disk) and $24.95 (cassette). *Address: 2818 University Drive, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.*

The Poet's Corner

We've often suspected that there's a wealth of talent among our readers and we were right. Here's a four-joystick poem written by Mike Sheinbaum which chronicles the obsessions of at least one video game addict. If you read the first letter of each line down, you'll discover a secret message. We'd be glad to hear from any more of you out there who are aspiring Robert or Elizabeth Brownings. Send us your work. We have a soft spot for literature here.

Notes of a Vidiot

I played FROGGER 'til I croaked

Losing SUBROC got me soaked
Only PAC-MAN left me
Vicious
Every monster was delicious

VENTURE sent me on a quest
I super-zapped upon TEMPEST
DONKEY KONG made me go ape
ELIMINATOR won't escape
On TIME PILOT I stormed the past

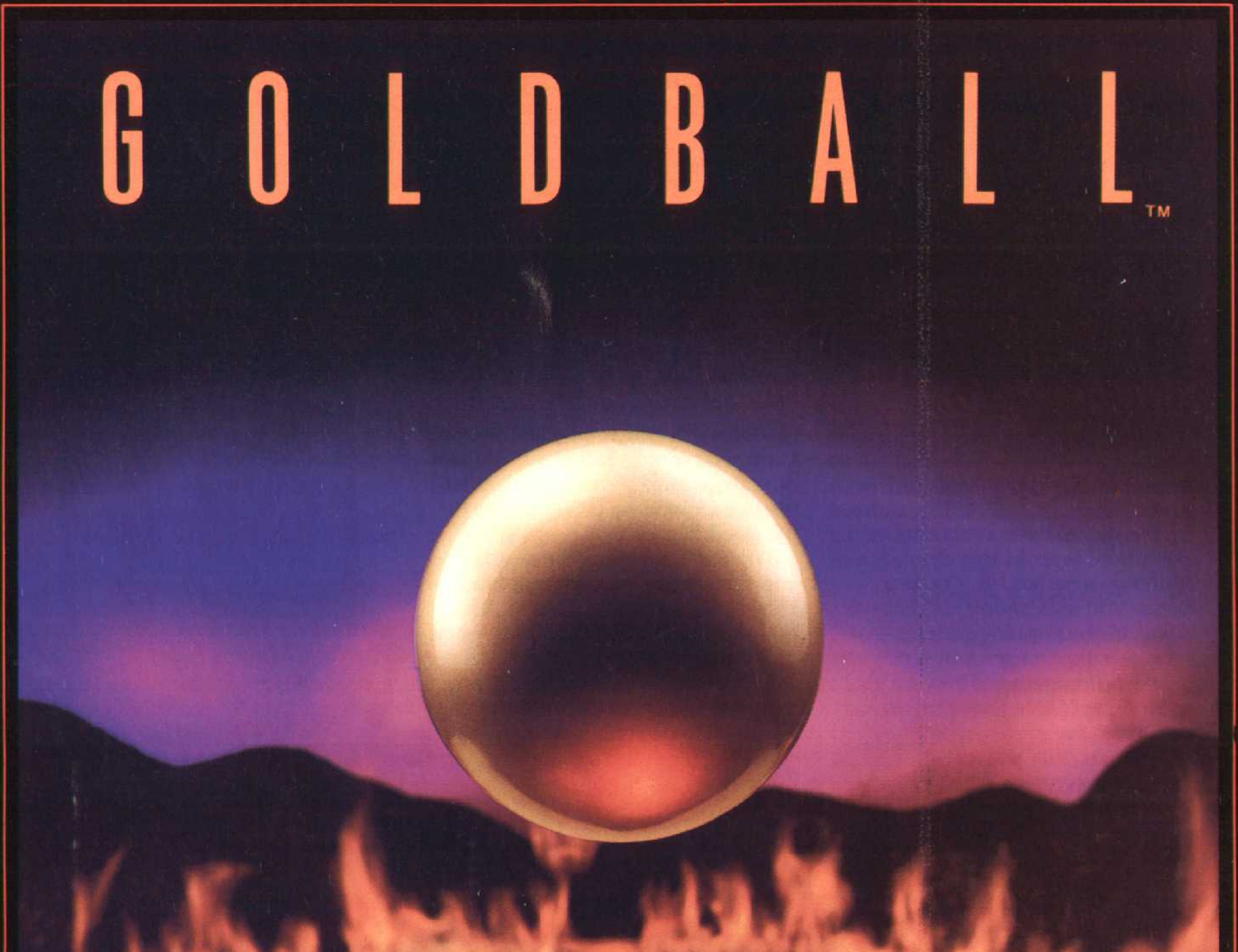
GORF gave me a laser blast
And something fishy's going on, when
MAKE TRAX is what I'm upon
Every day I play them more, 'cause
Someone's left a higher score

Secret Agent SV 318

Secret Agent 007 has taken on at least three new numbers and a couple of letters as well. Roger Moore, the current James Bond, was named the official spokesman of Spectravideo products and the numbers we referred to are SV 318 and SV 328—the Spectravideo computers. Mr. Moore will appear in all advertising and make personal appearances.

Have you got an item for the EFG Times? News events, game tips, photos and other information are gladly accepted. Send material to: EF, 350 E. 81st St., New York, New York 10028.

In the far reaches of your mind… light years away from your imagination…
exists the ultimate plateau in pinball excitement!



THE FUTURE OF PINBALL HAS JUST ARRIVED.

Bally **MIDWAY**™

Screenplays

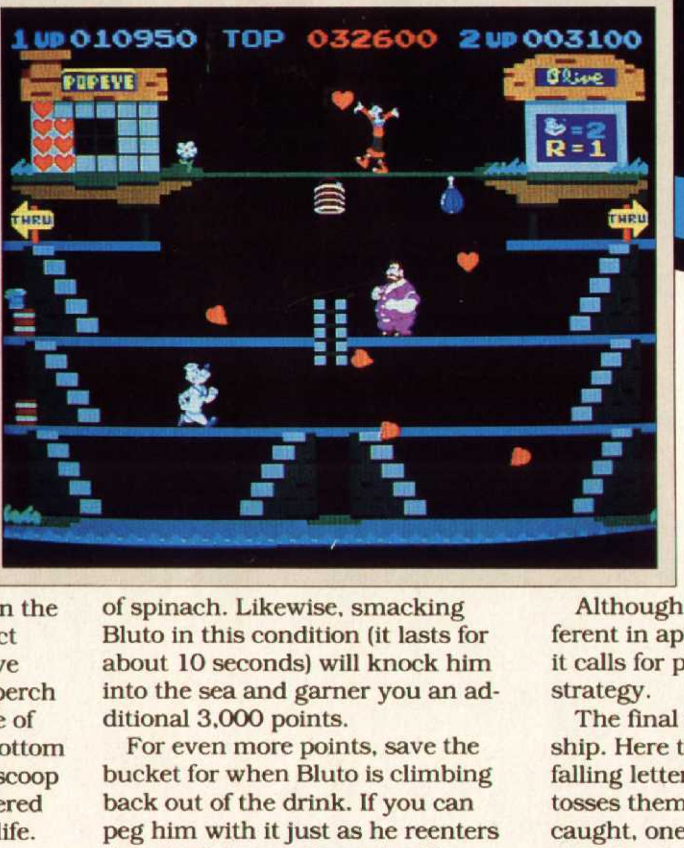
Xevious and Popeye:

POPEYE
POPEYE
Nintendo

By Michael Blanchet

POPEYE

This game, both in concept and execution, is strikingly similar to Nintendo's earlier hit, *Donkey Kong.* The underlying conflict—as it was in the popular cartoon series—is the never ending rivalry between Popeye and Bluto for the affections of Olive Oyl. The cartoon show was far more predictable than the game. No matter how much trouble Popeye got himself into, the outcome was never in doubt. By the end of the show, Popeye always opened his trusty can of spinach (which fit snugly into his sailor shirt with no telltale bulge), managed to overcome whatever peril he faced. The closing scene, more often than not, was a tender moment with Popeye and Olive again reunited and a disgruntled Bluto off somewhere licking his wounds. In the game version, the good guys don't always win.



Popeye features three different multi-level screens. In the first round your job is to collect each and every heart that Olive tosses down at you from her perch on the top of the screen. If one of these hearts makes it to the bottom level you have 10 seconds to scoop it up before it breaks. A shattered heart will cost you one game life.

Bagging Bluto

Bluto has a tendency to get in the way here. He can be temporarily disposed of with the bucket that is hanging beneath the upper-most platform. Timing is critical here. Hit the punching bag when Bluto is directly below the pail. If it falls on his head, chalk up 2,000 points for the good guys.

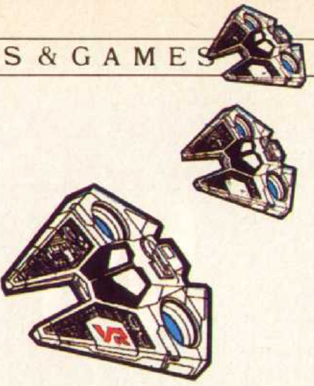
The *Popeye* equivalent of an energizer is—what else?—spinach. During this round, a can will float between the second and third levels of the playfield. To eat it you have to first punch it. Hearts are doubly lucrative while under the influence of spinach. Likewise, smacking Bluto in this condition (it lasts for about 10 seconds) will knock him into the sea and garner you an additional 3,000 points.

For even more points, save the bucket for when Bluto is climbing back out of the drink. If you can peg him with it just as he reenters the playfield, you'll get 4,000 points.

You'll need quite a few points to win an extra game life so get in the habit of picking up whatever you can whenever you can. One way to fatten your tally is to encourage Bluto to throw beer bottles at you. This can be done by simply moving to the level he currently occupies. Punch 'em as they come at you.

Although the second board is different in appearance from the first, it calls for pretty much the same strategy.

The final sequence is staged on a ship. Here the idea is to catch the falling letters (H-E-L-P) as Olive tosses them down. With each letter caught, one additional rung is added to the ladder that will eventually give Popeye access to Olive Oyl. Be patient. It takes a lot of letters to complete the ladder. The place to be in this screen is atop the moving platform on the third level.☐

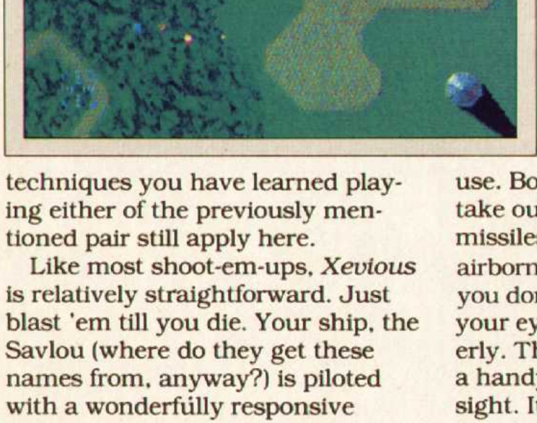


Olive Oyl and water don't mix

XEVIOUS

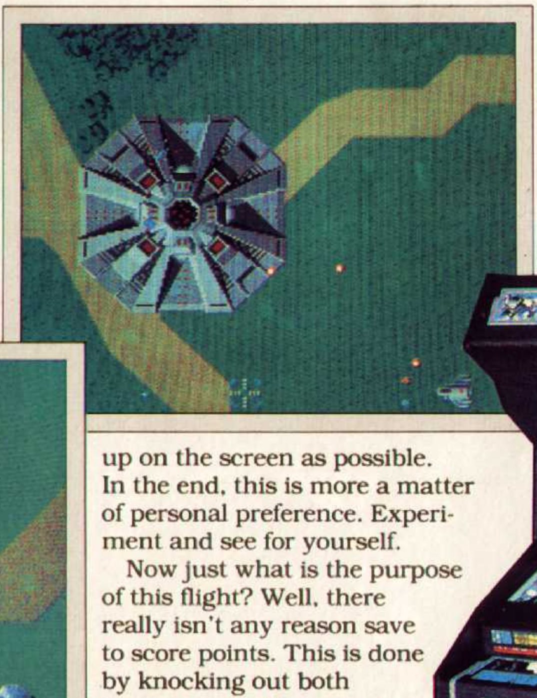
It is said that history always repeats itself. This is especially true in the world of video games. Most "new" games are little more than old concepts repackaged under the cloak of a new title.

Take *Xevious* for example. Graphically speaking, nothing out there can touch it. While no one will argue the fact that it looks good, most people can say they have encountered similar scenarios. Underneath all that fluff and spiffy visual treatment lies a game remarkably similar in concept to both *Zaxxon* and *Scramble*. The only thing that has been altered is the perspective. The techniques you have learned playing either of the previously mentioned pair still apply here.



Like most shoot-em-ups, *Xevious* is relatively straightforward. Just blast 'em till you die. Your ship, the Savlou (where do they get these names from, anyway?) is piloted with a wonderfully responsive eight-position joystick. Unlike *Zaxxon*, you need not concern yourself with altitude. Like *Scramble* though, altering your airspeed in relation to ground targets is an important tactical consideration.

Your ship has free run of about half of the playfield. I recommend playing back. Doing so in most cases effectively increases your reaction time. Of course there are instances where it pays to fly as far up on the screen as possible. In the end, this is more a matter of personal preference. Experiment and see for yourself.

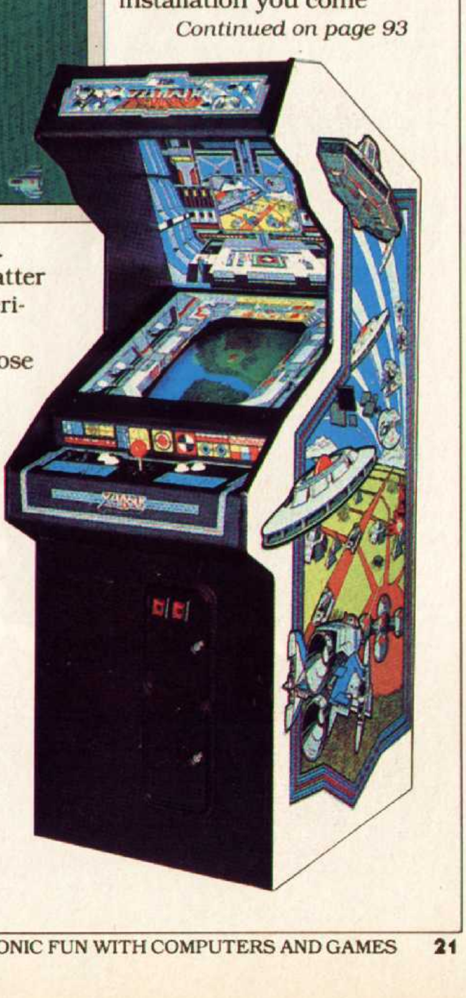


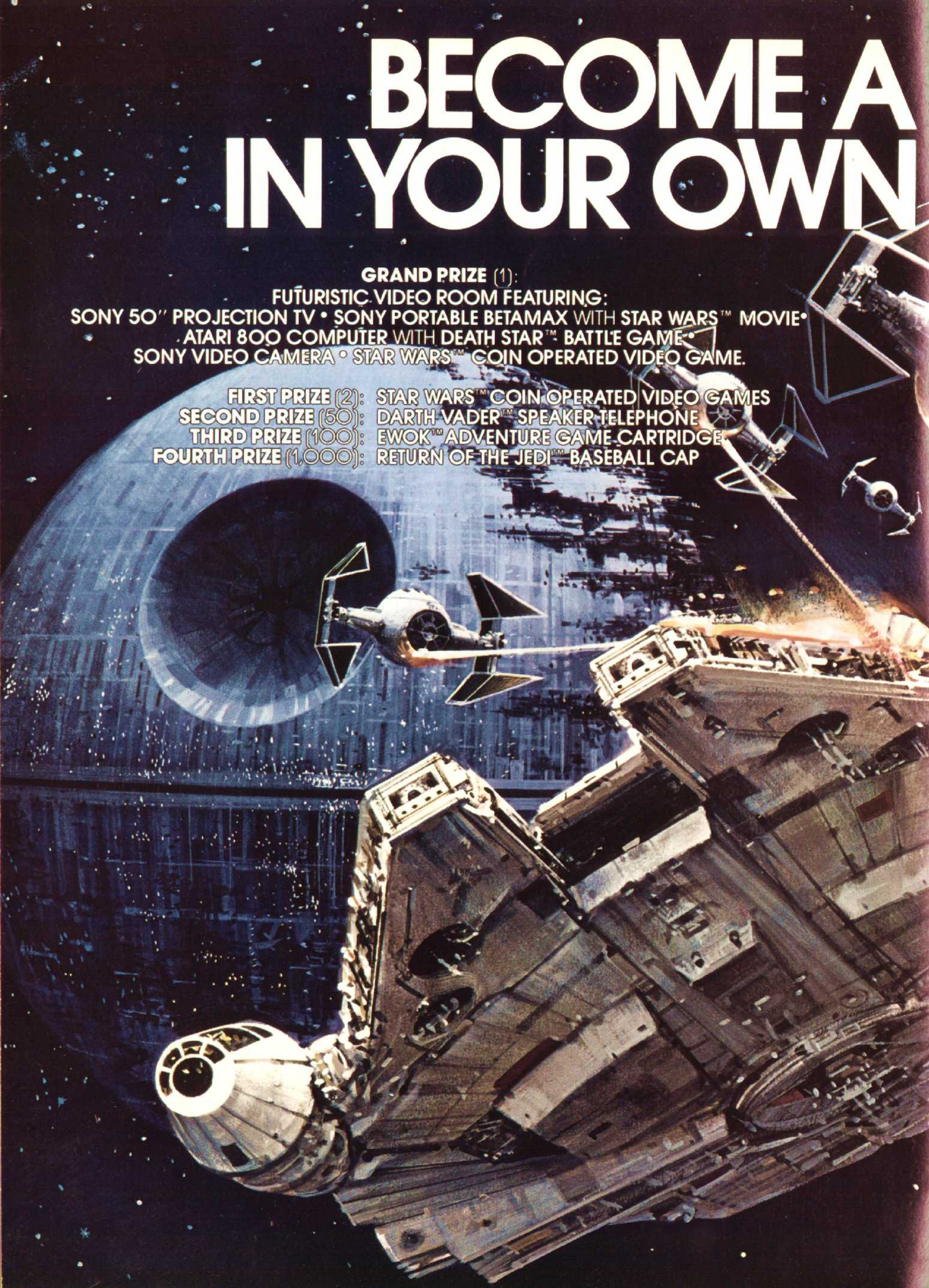
Now just what is the purpose of this flight? Well, there really isn't any reason save to score points. This is done by knocking out both air and ground targets. As in *Scramble*, you have a choice of munitions to use. Bombs naturally are used to take out ground targets, while missiles are most effective against airborne attackers. Unlike *Scramble*, you don't have to rely solely on your eyesight to place a bomb properly. The Savlou is equipped with a handy device known as a gun sight. It, like its counterpart in Atari's *Battlezone*, alters its appearance when you are on target. In this case the crosshairs will glow bright red. Hone your bombing skills. Ground targets are much more lucrative pointwise than their brothers in the sky. They are also a lot easier to hit since they don't move or fire back at you.

Ground Round

In earlier stages of play, concentrate on knocking out each and every ground target you encounter. They are sparsest here. Later on it will be physically impossible to annihilate every ground installation you come

Continued on page 93





BECOME A
IN YOUR OWN

GRAND PRIZE (1):
FUTURISTIC VIDEO ROOM FEATURING:
SONY 50″ PROJECTION TV • SONY PORTABLE BETAMAX WITH STAR WARS™ MOVIE•
ATARI 800 COMPUTER WITH DEATH STAR™ BATTLE GAME•
SONY VIDEO CAMERA • STAR WARS™ COIN OPERATED VIDEO GAME.

FIRST PRIZE (2):	STAR WARS™ COIN OPERATED VIDEO GAMES
SECOND PRIZE (50):	DARTH VADER™ SPEAKER TELEPHONE
THIRD PRIZE (100):	EWOK™ ADVENTURE GAME CARTRIDGE
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JEDI MASTER™ VIDEO ROOM

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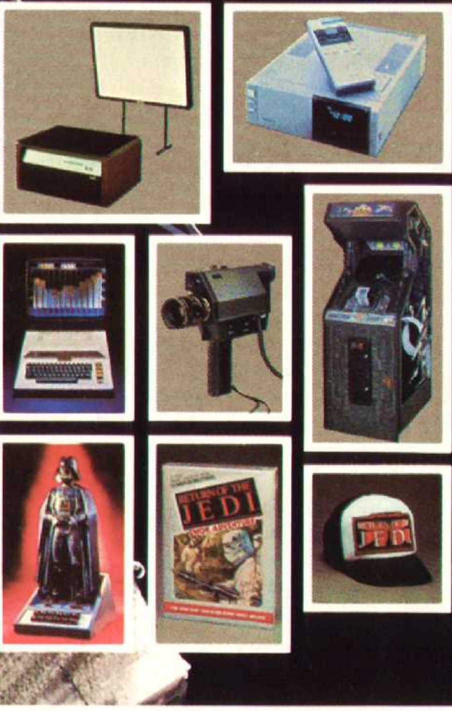

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MOVIE

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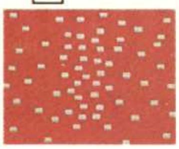
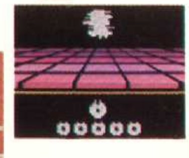
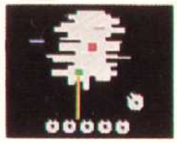
VIDEO GAME

☐ 

☐ 

☐ 

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output input

Dragon in the house

I recently heard that Coleco's ColecoVision cartridges are programmed in Pascal, as opposed to assembler or machine language. Is this true? From what I've read, Pascal can use up to four times more memory than a machine language program.

John Richardson
Rockwall, TX

Don't know where you heard *that* one, John, but Coleco says absolutely not—all Coleco cartridges are programmed in machine language, and for just the reason you outlined.

ATARI 1200XL

I was prepared to purchase an Atari 800 computer system, but all of a sudden they've come out with their new 1200XL, and from what I've heard, it's pretty good. Atari says the 1200XL "is compatible with our 400 and 800 computers." Do they mean completely? Is EVERTHING compatible? I'd rather hear it from you guys!

Ken Carlo
Roselle, NJ

We'd suggest you take a look at the August issue of *EF*, Ken, wherein our computer expert Jules Gilder gave the 1200 a thorough workout. We've found that all of the Atari 400/800 peripherals—joysticks, cassette drive, printer, etc.—work fine, but that much of the third-party software produced for the 400/800 computers will not run on the 1200—either (in the case of disks and cassettes) because the 1200 uses slightly different address codes than those available to 400/800 programmers, and/or (in the case of cartridges) because the cartridge slot demands a slightly smaller cartridge casing than that allowable on the 400/800. But all the Atari and Atari Program Exchange software we've tried will run on the 1200, and much of that third-party software is being redesigned.

Is Coleco going to make a voice module for ColecoVision?

Ryan Gregory
Aurora, WI

The company has been working on a voice module both for ColecoVision and for its new Adam computers, but hasn't set a time frame for release yet. The reason? "We haven't introduced them yet because the technology hasn't developed enough," says Coleco executive Al Kahn. "We don't want to release something that isn't ColecoVision quality."

I'm glad there's a magazine like yours to help confused gamers. Since I haven't gotten a response from Intellivision, I figured I should write to you. Would you know the address to which I should write to get a catalog from Mattel? Also, does anybody know if Intellivision will produce joysticks (not just attach-ons) and/or a roller controller?

Ralph Gazzillo
Steger, IL

If you want to order a catalog from Mattel Electronics, you can write to them at 5150 Rosecrans Ave., Hawthorne, CA 90250. I would suggest putting "Catalog Request" or "Attention Customer Service" on the outside of the envelope. Now, about the controllers, Mattel does have plans to market joysticks. The controllers will be identical in configuration to the Intellivision disc controllers (the 12-key keypad and side-action firing buttons will remain where they are now), only instead of the disc, there will be an arcade-style joystick. This product should be out well before Christmas (probably sometime early in the fall) along with the rest of the Entertainment Computer System. The controllers can be plugged into either the Intellivision Master Component or the Program Expander, and should cost about $12 or $13.

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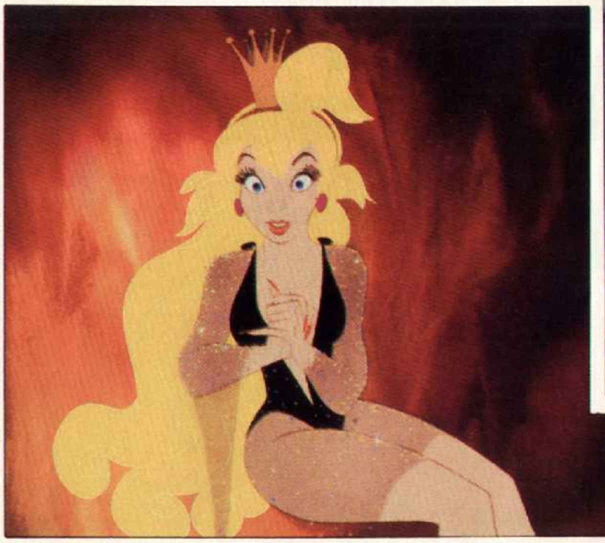

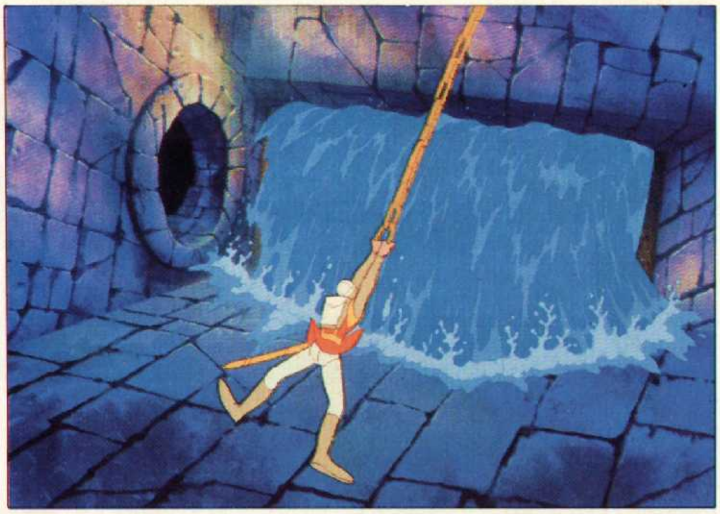

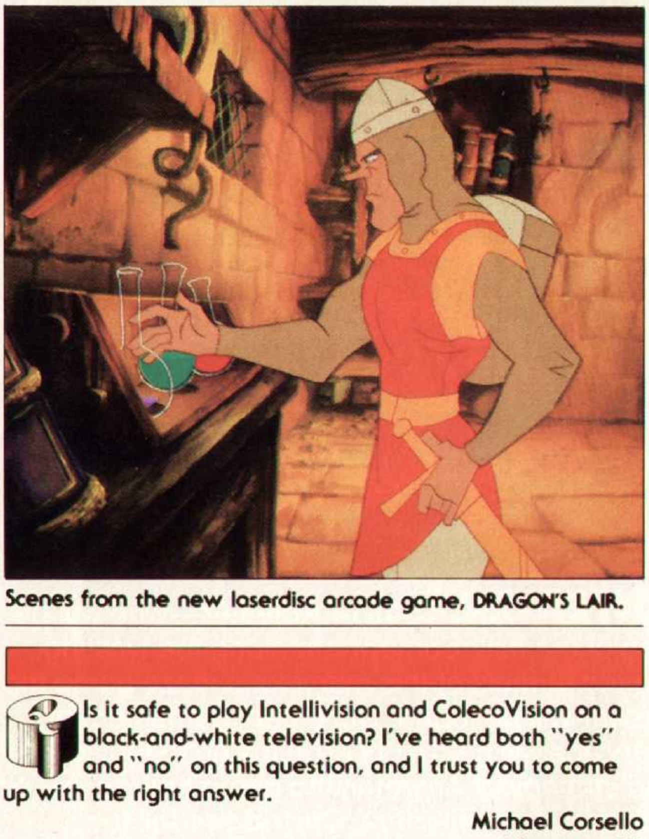

Scenes from the new laserdisc arcade game, **DRAGON'S LAIR.**

In your July issue you said Coleco had bought the home rights to DRAGON'S LAIR? Does that mean the home game will be in laserdisc form? If so, will I need an expensive disc player, or will Coleco come out with another exciting expansion module to handle this game?

Roddy Masker
Easley, SC

Coleco hasn't yet set a release date for the home version of *Dragon's Lair*, so there's really no firm information right now. But at least one Coleco executive believes the game will eventually be released in several formats—that is, separate versions that can be played on your ColecoVision console alone, with some kind of an expansion module, and another that would probably require a disc player of some kind (not necessarily a laserdisc player).

I own a VIC-20. I've heard some talk about an expansion module for the VIC-20 that lets you play Atari cartridges. When is this going to come out and how much will it cost?

David McAllister
Kanata, Ontario

There are actually two such units out now. The Cardapter/1 costs $89.95, and is available from Cardco Inc., 313 Mathewson, Wichita, KS 67214. The Card Loader costs $79.00, and can be ordered factory direct from Protecto Enterprizes, Box 550, Barrington, IL 60010. We haven't tested either model, but both allow you to play all Atari VCS-compatible carts through a VIC-20 without modifying either the computer or the cartridge.

Is it safe to play Intellivision and ColecoVision on a black-and-white television? I've heard both "yes" and "no" on this question, and I trust you to come up with the right answer.

Michael Corsello
Albertson, NY

The answer is yes to both systems, Michael. In fact, it's safe (for both you and the TV) to use a black-and-white set with any video game system or computer—but a gray explosion isn't nearly as exciting as a multi-colored one, is it?

Do you have a question about video games or computers that needs answering? Send your questions to: Electronic Fun, *350 E. 81st St., New York, NY 10028.*

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POWER TRIPPING

Games that let you rule the world

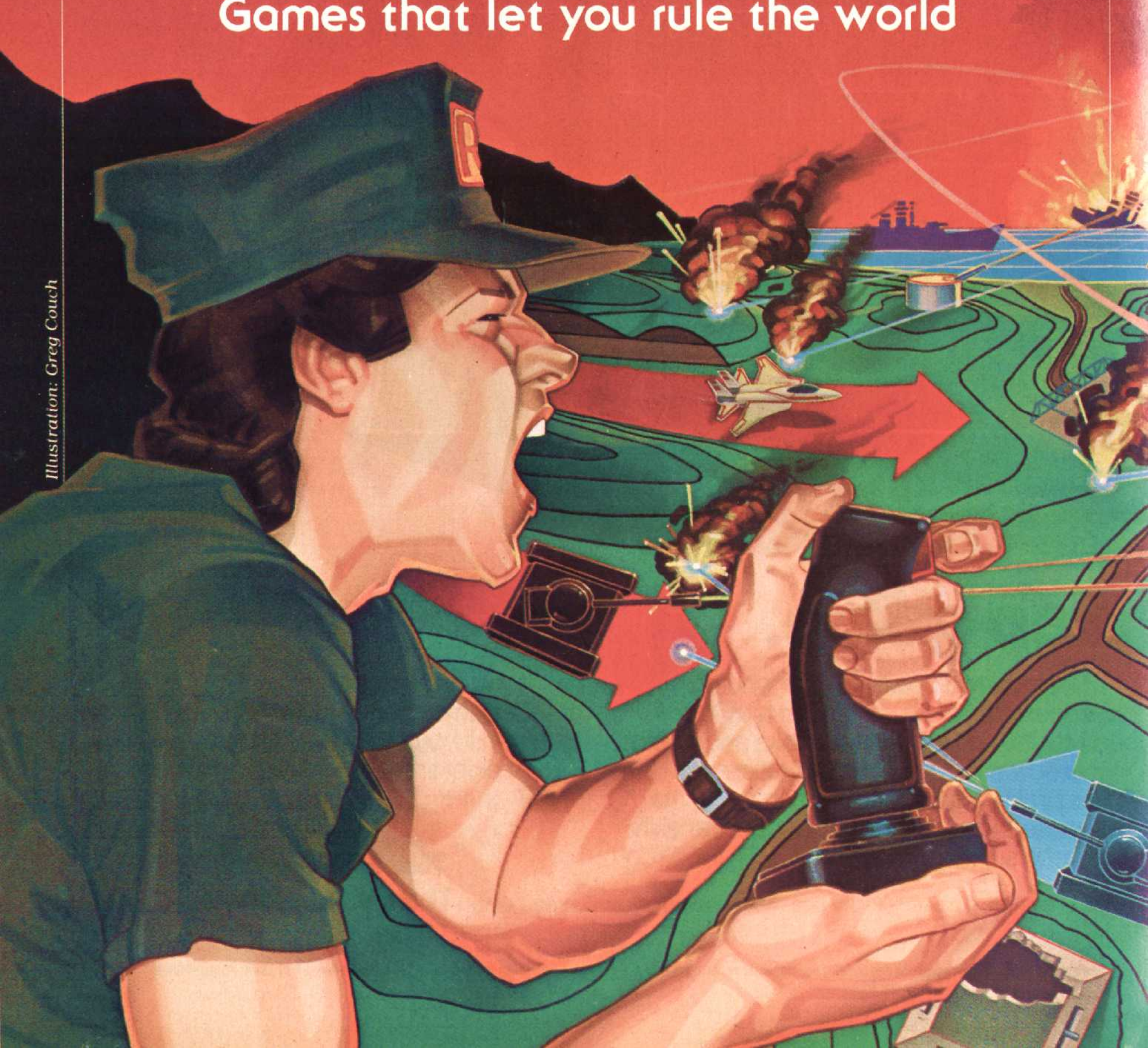


Illustration: Greg Couch

Even if you hate computers and cringe at the mere mention of their name, if you want to be fair, you have to admit they're fast. Computers allow you to do what once took hours in a matter of minutes. They also let you do what once took centuries in a matter of hours—things like colonizing the Americas. Some of the most popular games out are not really games at all, but simulations—recreations of anything from flying a 747 to running an empire to drilling for oil. As recently as, say, 15 years ago, if you had a secret desire to be Napoleon, you were laughed at and told to see a psychiatrist. Now, instead, you can get into strategy simulation games.

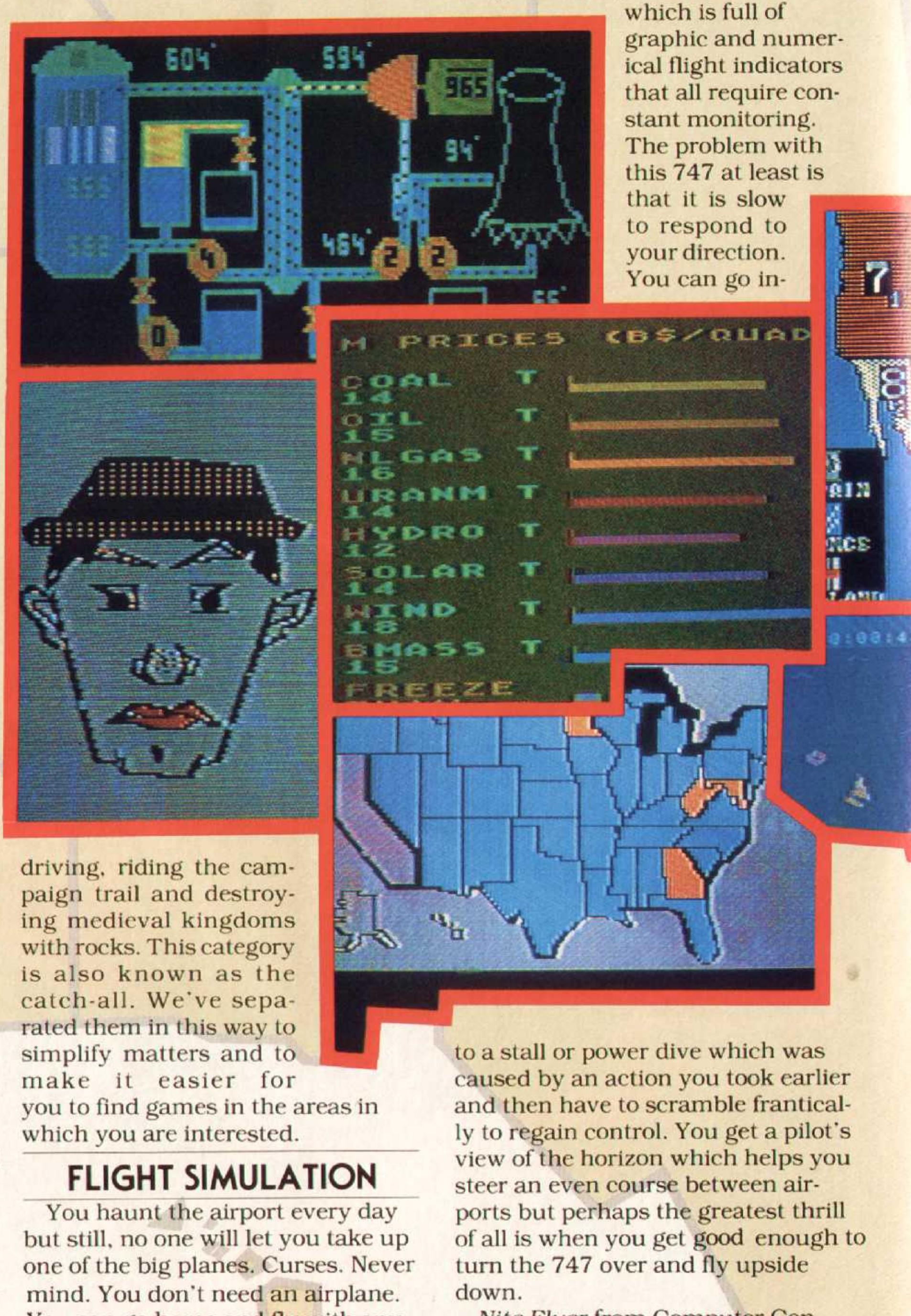
By Phil Wiswell

There's an old riddle which goes like this: How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice. Practice is pretty much how you get anywhere but there are a few things that it is impractical to practice. If you want to be a jet pilot, for example, you're not going to get much of an opportunity to practice flying a 747 with crew and passengers unless you find a pilot with a death wish. And if you want to be a Wall Street tycoon, well, very few people are going to willingly donate millions of dollars for you to throw away on the stock market while you learn the ups and downs of investing. And, if you've always dreamt of discovering and colonizing a distant land or planet, you're also out of luck. All the continents have been discovered and most of them would not take kindly to your rediscovering them and expecting them to change their names to yours. At the very least they would resent having to change all their stationery.

Be All That You Can Be

Fortunately, the computer age is here and with it have come simulations, meaning that all the things you wish you could do can be done and many of them very realistically. Using computers and the right software, you can pilot a jumbo jet with no fear of killing innocent people (to say nothing of yourself). With other programs, you can journey back to the 15th Century and discover a New World or, if you're more futuristic and were weaned on *Star Trek*, you can explore the limitless expanse of space and start a new colony there where there won't be any religious oppression or what have you. You can even gamble and lose millions of dollars on the stock market without ending up in the poor house or waking up to find your house repossessed.

There are any number of strategy simulation games out there and we've divided them into four categories—Flight Simulation, in which you control the wings of man; Colonization, in which you are responsible for setting up a new world conceived in liberty, etc.; Finance, in which you are given vast sums of money to fritter away or add to and Other, into which category fall games which simulate such diverse occupations as truck driving, riding the campaign trail and destroying medieval kingdoms with rocks. This category is also known as the catch-all. We've separated them in this way to simplify matters and to make it easier for you to find games in the areas in which you are interested.



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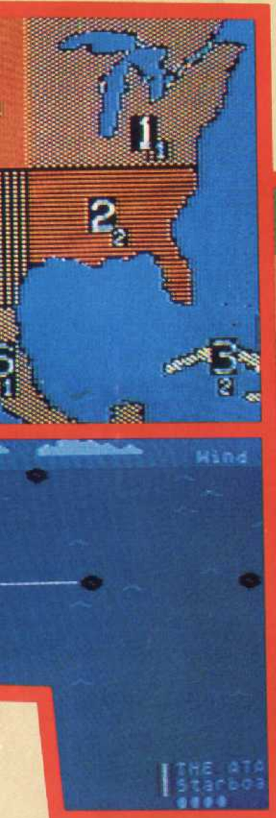
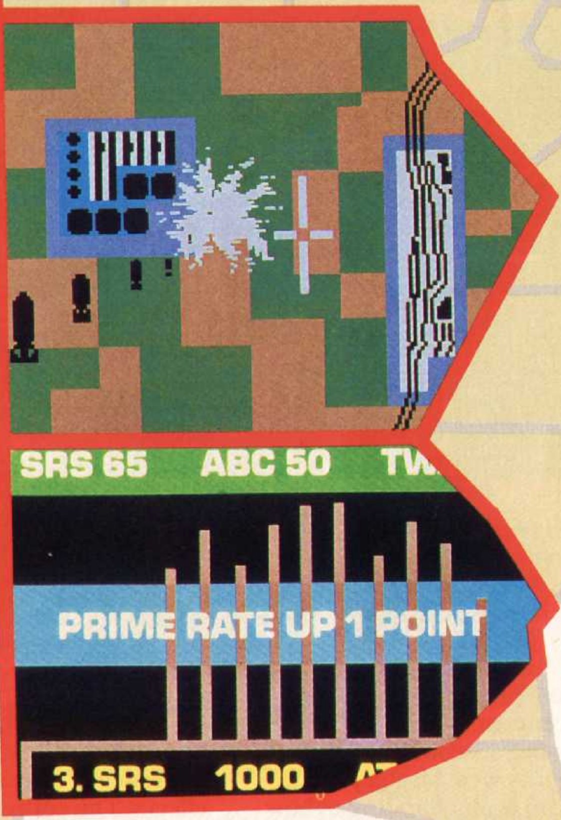
FLIGHT SIMULATION

You haunt the airport every day but still, no one will let you take up one of the big planes. Curses. Never mind. You don't need an airplane. You can go home and fly with any of the following programs.

If you've ever had any desire to be a 747 pilot, playing Thorn/EMI's *Jumbo Jet Pilot* (for the Atari 400/800) might make you bury that fantasy forever. After discovering how difficult it is to keep one of those babies in the air you might switch career goals to something more modest like egg candling. The entire game is played on one screen which is full of graphic and numerical flight indicators that all require constant monitoring. The problem with this 747 at least is that it is slow to respond to your direction. You can go into a stall or power dive which was caused by an action you took earlier and then have to scramble frantically to regain control. You get a pilot's view of the horizon which helps you steer an even course between airports but perhaps the greatest thrill of all is when you get good enough to turn the 747 over and fly upside down.

Nite Flyer from Computer Consultants of Iowa for the Atari 400/800 also claims to simulate the control of a 747 but this is a misrepresentation starting with the simplest detail of flying—the joystick. In real planes, you push the joystick forward to dive and pull back on it to climb. In *Nite Flyer* it's just the opposite. Imagine how well a mistake like this would go over at 30,000 feet carrying a bunch of eager tourists to Europe. There are also other little annoying glitches. For example, you crash without explanation and the scoring mechanism is so complicated that you really can't figure out how to improve your performance. The incomplete instruction booklet is no help here either. If fright and intimidation were, in fact, important cockpit elements, then *Nite Flyer* would be a real winner.





Rendezvous from Edu-Ware for the Apple II is by far the most demanding and most faithful simulation around. However, it is only for those who are really serious about learning to fly. If you don't want to understand how things like ballistics, centrifugal force, inertia and residual velocity affect the complicated maneuvers of an advanced space shuttle, stay away from this program. The manual is long, requires intense study and explains all the differences between the game and reality. The payoff, if you can get through all the documentation and technical stuff, is one of the most exciting combinations of a mental game with animated graphics. Your object of docking with an orbiting space station is performed in four animated phases. First comes lift-off, then establishing orbit, approaching the space station and finally alignment and docking. Fortunately, each phase can be experienced alone or the whole thing can be played as one complete game. And the graphic animation in *Rendezvous* is superb.

A game that combines computer screens with a game board is *Airline* from Adventure International for the Atari 400/800 and a 16K TRS-80. In this simulation, the computer really just moderates, although there are variations in which it will play against you. By far the best version is with four players, each vying to buy landing rights to airports that are adjacent on a grid of six-by-six squares. Once you have acquired adjacent landing rights, you can purchase one of five kinds of airplanes—from an airbus to a Concorde—and you begin automatically collecting fares each turn. This is a mathematical game challenge because each airport and type of plane combination yields a different money value in fares. For this reason, *Airline* pales fairly quickly. It's fun, but you really don't need a computer to generate this simulation.

Computer To Co-Pilot

B-17 Bomber from Mattel for Intellivision is a voice-enhanced game in which you must fly repeated missions across the English Channel and bomb as many targets in Europe as possible. Most of the strategy, however, is used in trying to keep your B-17 airborne. You can call up nine different screens—from pilot and machine gunner views to the instrument panel—and you get some audible help from the voices of your crew. When you need to man the forward machine gun, a voice screams, "Bandits, twelve o'clock!" Flying this plane is no easy task—you must monitor speed, altitude, pitch, roll and many other factors, not the least of which is fuel. The game is graphically exciting, includes a fair amount of hand/eye coordination and can easily last an hour or two. It is one of the few flight simulation games that exist for video games, most of them being for computers, and therefore deserves recognition.

For the Atari 800 comes *Controller* from Avalon Hill which puts you on the opposite end of things—you sit in front of a radarscope and a host of other instrument indicators but your seat is in the control tower of a busy airport. Actually, the airport is rather small—only two runways—but you won't find things boring trying to direct the approach patterns and landing order of up to eight planes. It's a juggling act—mostly performed upstairs—but there is a certain

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Clockwise from top left: SCRAM, from APX; ENERGY CZAR (APX); NEW WORLD, from Epyx; Mattel's B-17 BOMBER; Odyssey's GREAT WALL ST. FORTUNE HUNT; APX's MICRO SAILING; PRESIDENT ELECT (SSI); POLICE ARTIST from Sir-Tech.

element of reaction time that keeps you on your toes and prevents the game from being tedious.

FINANCE

We all want to be rich. Admit it. But it takes money to get money and as all of our mothers and grandmothers have told us repeatedly in the past, money doesn't grow on trees. Well, it may not be part of the foliage native to our fair planet but it does grow (after a fashion) on floppy disks and you can practice investing and cashing in using Filthy Rich Simulations.

From Epyx, there's *Oil Barons* which runs on the Atari 800. This game could very easily be called *Dallas* or *The Ewings* in that your fortune comes from drilling and searching for oil. It can be played alone or with up to eight players. Be prepared for a very complicated game, though. The easiest version of the nine skill levels can take as long as two hours and the longer games can be saved to disk and played over a period of months. None of this overnight millionaire business here. The computer keeps track of all factors including each company's positions and holdings and these are displayed on a colorful mapboard using counters and pieces. Private land deals can be struck; surveys and geological samples can be taken and, if you're not careful, dry holes (instead of the gratifying gushers) can be drilled that will cost you a pretty penny. You've also got to contend with random events such as Congress' turning a parcel of your land into a national park. If you're patient and greedy, this is a fantastic game.

Buy! Sell! Go Broke!

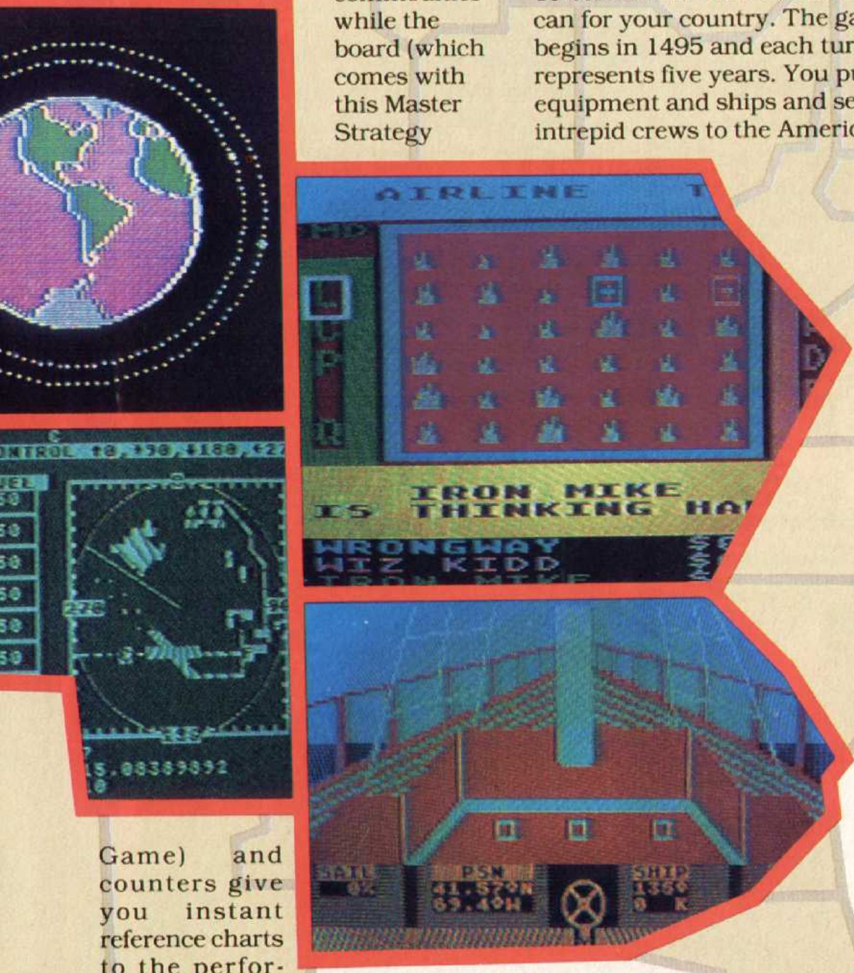
From Strategic Simulations for the Apple II is *Cartels & Cutthroats* which makes you the president of a large company. It can be played alone against the computer or against as many as five other human opponents. The game is entirely text and the challenge is, again, to make the most money. A realistic touch is the five reports you receive each turn from your corporate officers. And you'd better read them because you need all the input you can get. It's entirely up to you how the company fares. You control the type of goods to be manufactured, allot money for research and development, create advertising budgets, build factories and much more. *Cartels & Cutthroats* is not a game you simply sit down and play. It takes some study not only of the rules but of economic principles as well. Mastery comes through an understanding of how your financial figures change under the combined factors of the economic environment, extraneous market forces and production management. But, despite the effort—or perhaps because of it—the game is heady, enjoyable, long-distance fun.

Computer Stocks & Bonds from Avalon Hill for the Atari 800 does not try to be a faithful simulation of real life investments so much as it tries to be a good game. It proves the old adage,"The rich get richer." Up to four can play and you don't take turns. It's a free-for-all scramble in which all players actively buy, trade and sell at all times. This naturally keeps the action moving at a good clip. The rule book is short and you don't have to know the difference between a bull market and a bear market to play. Thank goodness.

SKILL: 1
FUEL
SAVE/END GAME
LAUNCH MISSILE
TRAFFIC

For the Atari from APX is *Energy Czar* which is fascinating despite the absence of graphics and sound effects. The entire display consists of text menus from which you choose your strategy—you can freeze or thaw prices, raise or lower taxes, promote or restrict supply and ration or free-up usage of the seven individual sources of energy. Each turn represents five years and after each turn the population takes a vote. If you act like some government officials we won't name, you'll be ousted before you can say "I am not a crook," but give the people enough energy and you'll receive the minimum 30 percent vote you need to stay in office another term.

For the Odyssey there's *The Great Wall Street Fortune Hunt* which puts you in charge of millions of dollars worth of investment portfolios and allows you to buy and sell orders in order to amass even greater personal fortunes. The screen acts as a ticker tape, constantly scrolling the changing prices of the stocks and commodities while the board (which comes with this Master Strategy Game) and counters give you instant reference charts to the performance values of the real companies used. Each of the four different skill levels increases the sophistication of the simulation adding such things as treasury bills, buying on margin and stock options.



Clockwise from top left: JUMBO JET PILOT (UMI); EPIDEMIC (SSI); RENDEZVOUS (Edu-Ware); AIRLINE (Adventure International); PDI's CLIPPER; CONTROLLER (Avalon Hill); M.U.L.E. (Electronic Arts); 747 LANDING SIMULATOR (APX).

COLONIZATION

Colonization games are the best of all possible new worlds. They remove all the bodily dangers inherent in exploration while leaving in all the excitement of finding and establishing colonies.

If Christopher Columbus had had an Apple II with 48K he wouldn't have needed the Nina, Pinta or the Santa Maria and he wouldn't have lost all those poor sailors to scurvy. He could have bought *New World* instead. In this Epyx game you assume the identity of the monarch of France, England or Spain. You send out expeditions in order to establish as many of the potential 13 colonies in the new world as you can for your country. The game begins in 1495 and each turn represents five years. You purchase equipment and ships and send your intrepid crews to the Americas in the hopes of beating your opponents to those colonies which promise the highest productivity. You can dig for gold, terrorize native populations, attack other players' colonies or just sit back and collect taxes from the settlers. The majority of the game is text with two color maps of the Americas and one animated scene depicting the Atlantic crossing. It is also available for the TRS-80.

If being a king isn't enough power for you, then why not try being supreme ruler? This can be accomplished in *Kingdom*, an APX Atari game which is all text and mostly a mathematical challenge. As supreme ruler you can do whatever you want, but if you don't keep your population fed you'll bring about an early end to your reign and be declared "national fink" by the computer. Each turn represents one year and the object is to make it through ten years. This earns you the chance to go for another ten. You may buy or sell acres of the kingdom's land and plant crops and you must donate 20 bushels per person to the people in order to keep them from starving.

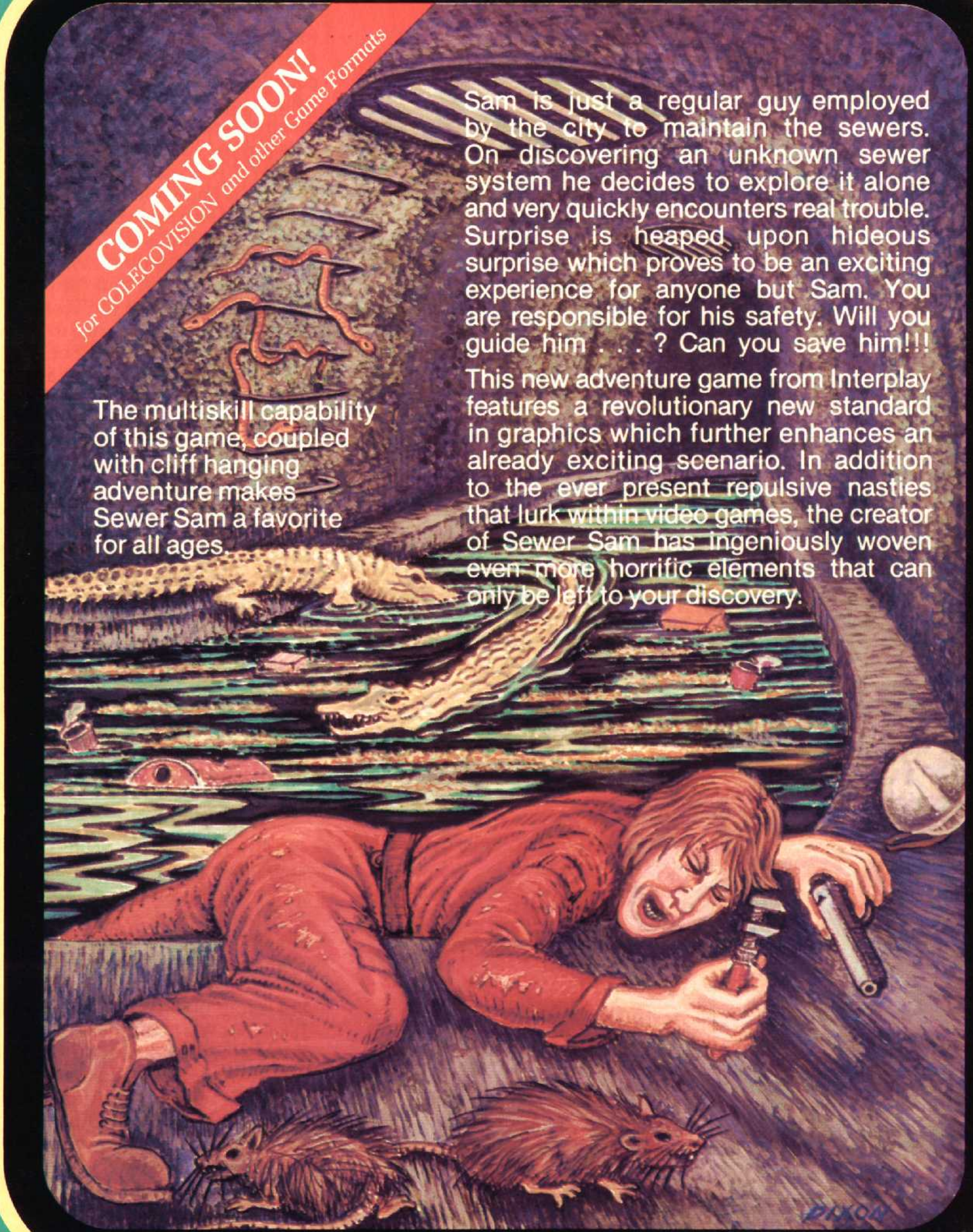
Those who have dreamt of owning and running their own island will like Mattel's *Utopia* for Intellivision. The object is to keep your people fat and happy by planting crops, building factories, forts, schools, hospitals and housing and defending yourself against mercenary soldiers from other islands. Randomly generated rainstorms, pirate ships, schools of fish and hurricanes affect all your decisions and everything you do depletes your gold reserve and affects your population's well-being.

Git Along Ol' M.U.L.E.

If running a colony is not your cup of tea but settling is, then *M.U.L.E.* from Electronic Arts for the Atari computers is your game. The title stands for Multi Use Labor Element and the character looks like a video mule. It's all you get to stake your claim on some land and develop it. You outfit your M.U.L.E. at the store and then take it into the barren wilderness. You can produce food and energy or you can mine for Smithore in mountain territory. The M.U.L.E. of the title resembles his earthly counterpart in many ways, not the least of which is how it will work its whole life for just one

Continued on page 90

Sewer Sam™


COMING SOON!
for COLECOVISION and other Game Formats
DIXON

Sam is just a regular guy employed by the city to maintain the sewers. On discovering an unknown sewer system he decides to explore it alone and very quickly encounters real trouble. Surprise is heaped upon hideous surprise which proves to be an exciting experience for anyone but Sam. You are responsible for his safety. Will you guide him . . . ? Can you save him!!!

This new adventure game from Interplay features a revolutionary new standard in graphics which further enhances an already exciting scenario. In addition to the ever present repulsive nasties that lurk within video games, the creator of Sewer Sam has ingeniously woven even more horrific elements that can only be left to your discovery.

The multiskill capability of this game, coupled with cliff hanging adventure makes Sewer Sam a favorite for all ages.

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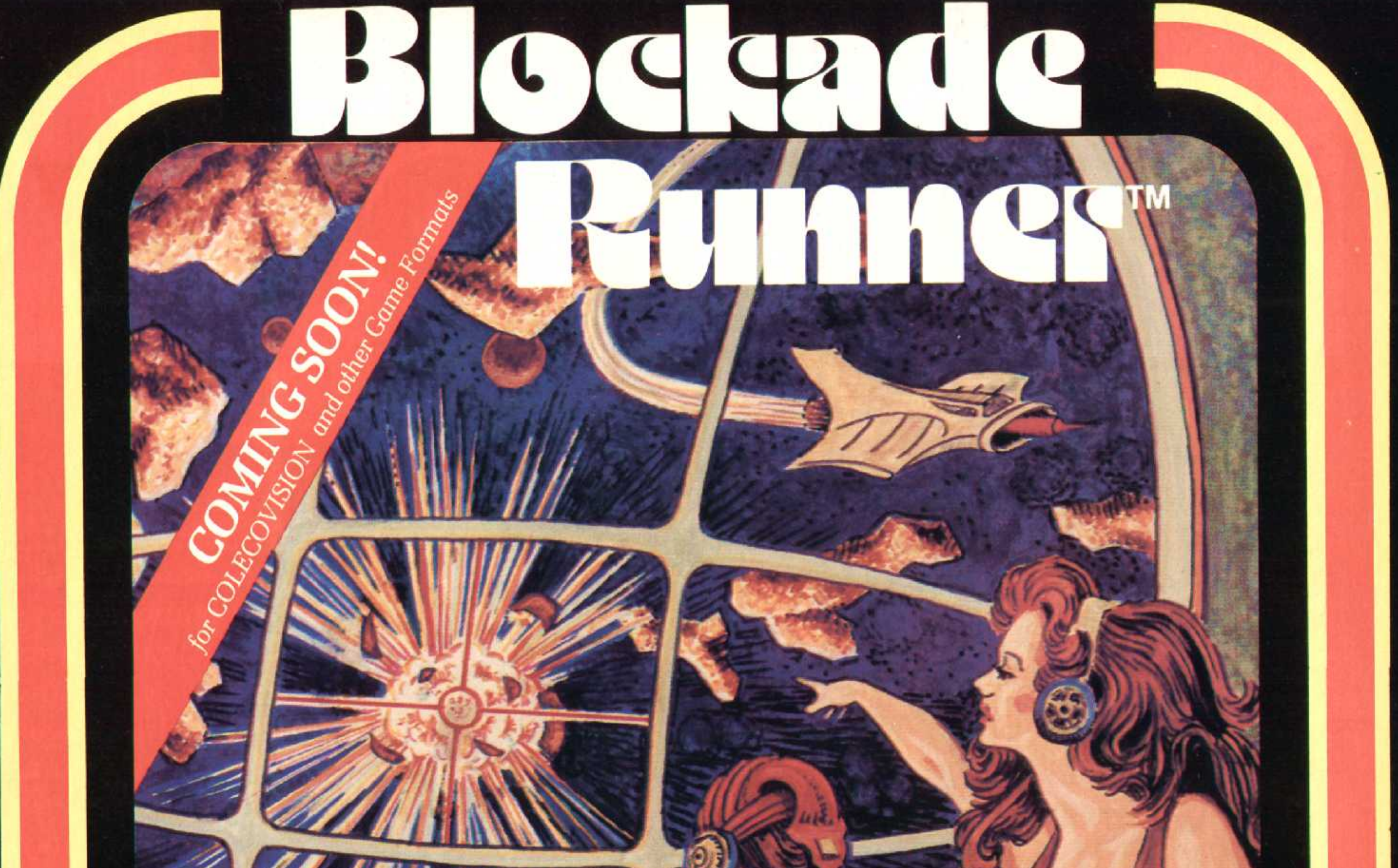
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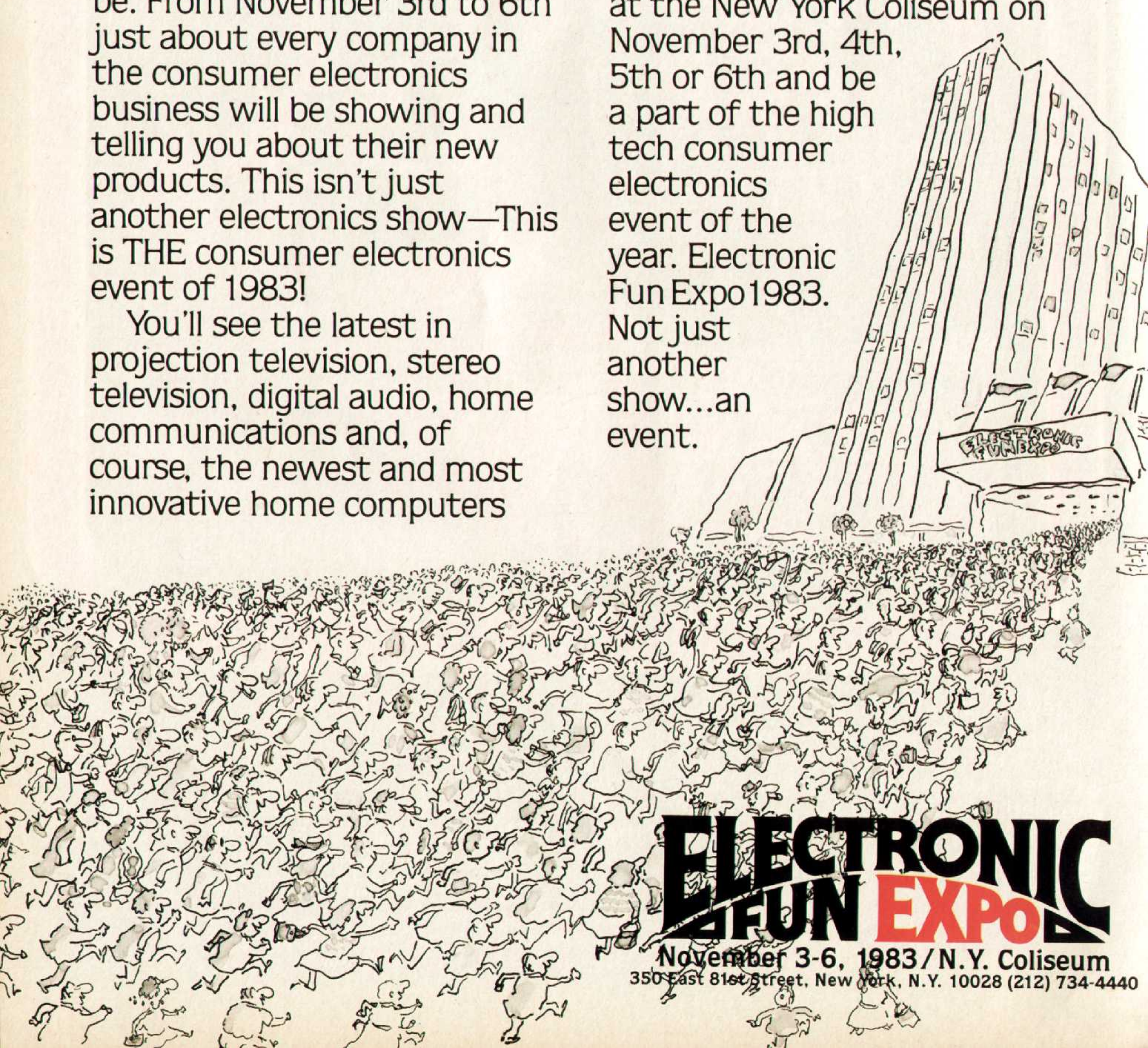

ELECTRONIC FUN EXPO

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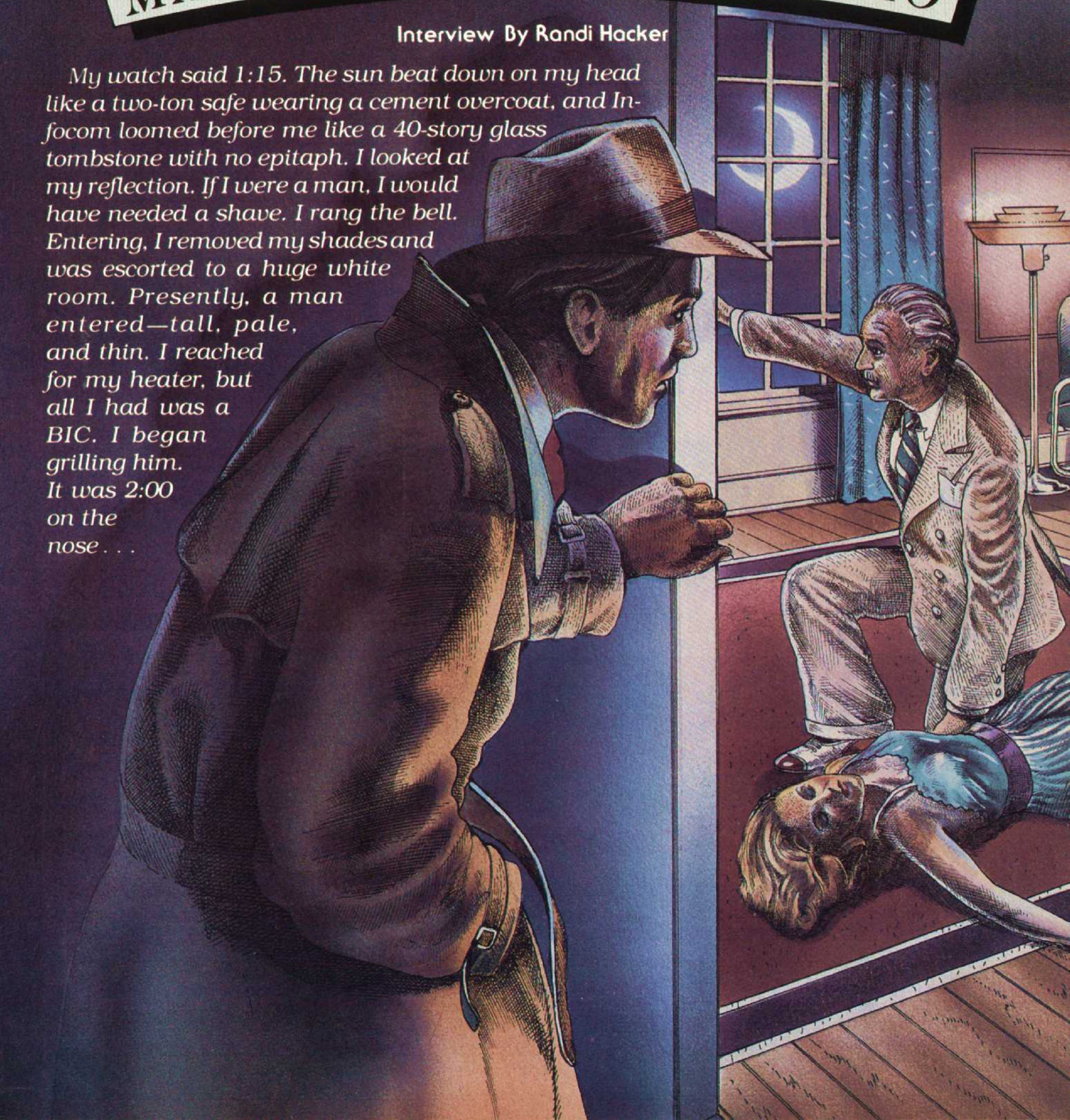
EF'S

GAMEMAKERS

WHO DUNNIT?

MARC BLANK ... THAT'S WHO

Interview By Randi Hacker



My watch said 1:15. The sun beat down on my head like a two-ton safe wearing a cement overcoat, and Infocom loomed before me like a 40-story glass tombstone with no epitaph. I looked at my reflection. If I were a man, I would have needed a shave. I rang the bell. Entering, I removed my shades and was escorted to a huge white room. Presently, a man entered—tall, pale, and thin. I reached for my heater, but all I had was a BIC. I began grilling him. It was 2:00 on the nose . . .

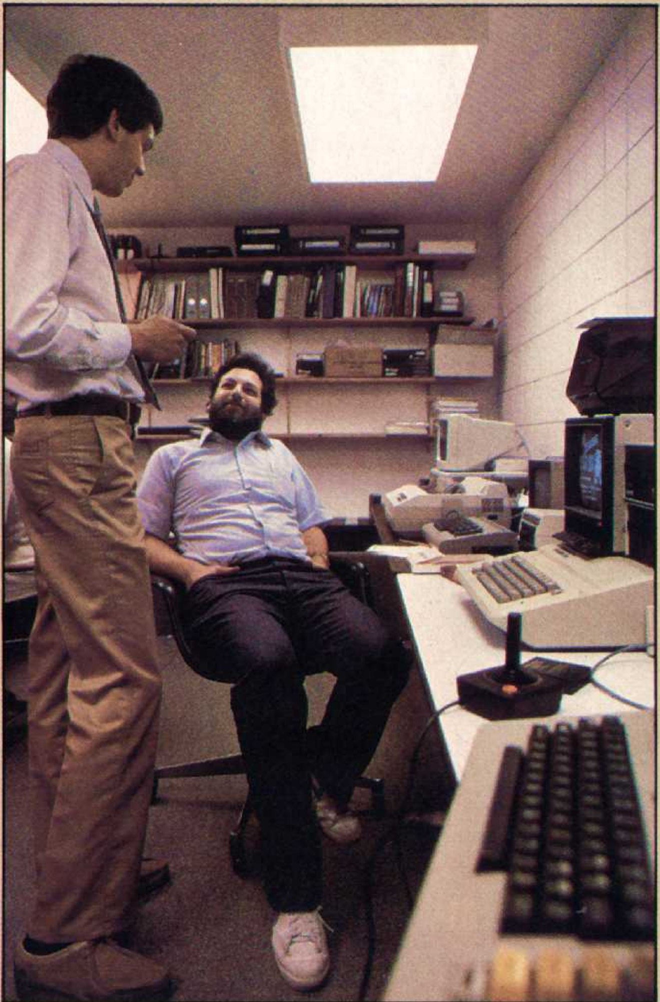
Was DEADLINE the first game you designed?
MB: No. It was the *Zorks*, which were originally written some time ago. Back in 1977, I wrote a game called *Zork* with a couple of other people at MIT in a lab for computer science. It was written on a mainframe and it only ran on a mainframe and it was inspired by the original *Adventure* game that Don Woods and Will Crowther wrote which was floating around in '76. It was a huge game. It had 250 places to be. In '79, when Infocom started I designed a system with a collaborator to allow us to get those same games to run on microcomputers. The biggest problem was that *Zork* on the mainframe was over a megabyte in size which isn't very practical when you're talking about microcomputers and floppy disks which at that time were averaging about 80K. The first thing we did was design a language and a system that would enable us to get an incredible amount of compression and what we eventually got was about 10 to one. So what was originally on the order of a megabyte or more was on the order of about 120,000 bytes. Then we split the game into two games which became *Zork I* and *II*. *Zork I* is mostly the old game and *Zork II* is half old and half new and *Zork III* is a tiny bit old game and almost all new.

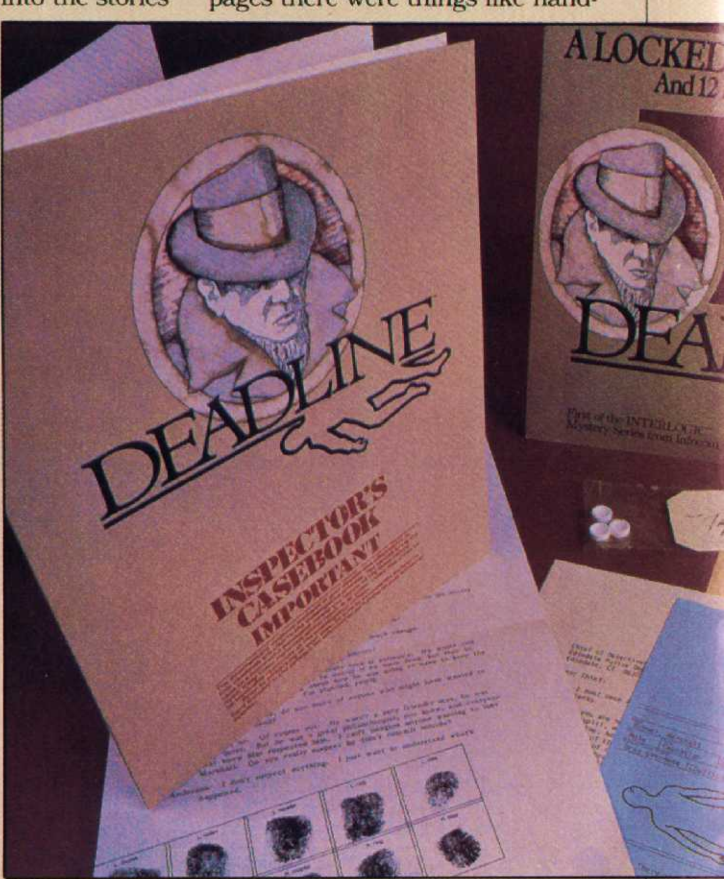
The original idea was to make it a trilogy. Even when we knew we could fit most of it into two games, we thought that actually it would hold together better as a trilogy and we could save the problems we'd accumulated and fit them into the stories better rather than having to arbitrarily cram them into one game.

Deadline was written in 1981 and that was something I did on my own when I was working half-time for Infocom. *Zork I* and *II* were out at the time and we were working on *Zork III*. We knew that would come out the next year.

I wanted to do something different—a different genre than fantasy—and in thinking about it, it became obvious that as for fiction, what lends itself most closely to being a game is something like a mystery because mysteries, even when you're reading them, have a lot of game aspects. You're constantly playing along with them trying to figure out what's going on, and you're solving it yourself as you're going through it.

Then there were these books that came out that were reprinted from books done in the Thirties. They were sort of oversized paperbacks but instead of being regular printed pages there were things like hand-




A LOCKED
And 12
DEADLINE
INSPECTOR'S CASEBOOK IMPORTANT
DEA
First of the INTERLOGIC Mystery Series from Infocom

Lead Illustration by Roger Leyonmark

written letters, interviews, etc. And the whole idea behind them was that you were the inspector, you were given a case and you had to solve it. You read through all the things and you were supposed to figure out who did it. Also included was this little sealed packet in the back and after you'd read through the book, thought and agonized for a while, you'd open the pack to get the solution. The problem with that was that you couldn't go back and do it again. Once you gave up and read the answer it was done. That's a little disappointing. You really wished that they would just give you a little hint so you could go back and see more each time and do something else. That was when I came up with the idea to do something like *Deadline*.

The intention was to really have a mystery story with you as the main character and every time you went through it you'd see different things and eventually *you* would piece it together yourself. And depending on what evidence you had, you'd get hints as to what you were missing and to what you should go back and do. It isn't something you just play once.

EF: What's different about DEADLINE as far as game play goes?

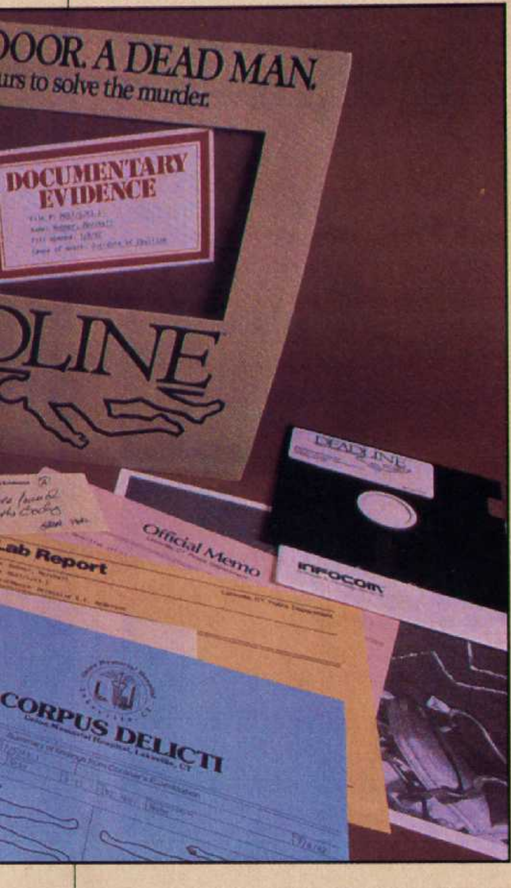
MB: It added a few dimensions that weren't in any other games and, to my knowledge, still aren't in any other games. For example, during the course of the game there are other characters who are doing things while you're playing. They all have motivations and what they do depends on what you've done to some extent. They'll do something even if you don't, but sometimes their actions are affected by what you do.

EF: Your characters move from room to room. For instance, the widow, Mrs. Robner, moves from the staircase to the living room at one point. Does she do that every time you reach that point on the disk or is it random?

MB: No, it's not random. She comes downstairs at some point or goes upstairs at some point.

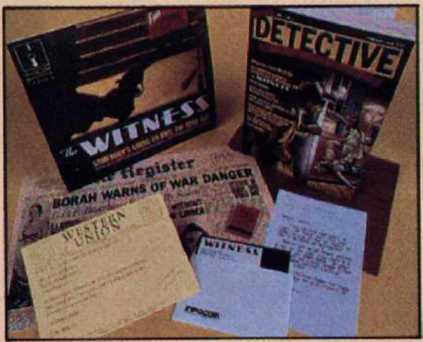
EF: We were upstairs and the phone rang.

MB: The phone call is an interesting case. The phone call really depends on where you are and where she is when the phone rings. The phone doesn't always ring on exactly the same move. You can be in different places. In fact, *she* can be in different places. For example, the phone rings while you're in the living room. If you pick it up, she'll come in and take it from you and then she'll talk to the person on the line and say, "I can't talk now, I'll speak to you later." Then she'll leave, go to her room and make a phone call. She'll close the door. Now, if you follow her into her room, she'll ask you to leave and she'll be very impatient. At some point she'll give



STARCROSS
INFOCOM

ZORK I
ZORK II
ZORK III



SUSPENDED
INFOCOM

Marc Blank, (far left) who designed DEADLINE (center) studied to be a doctor at Albert Einstein Medical School. To his parents' great disappointment, he never did his residency so although he has an MD, he can't practice medicine. He can, however, write murder mysteries with murders that are perfect from a medical standpoint. This is a great deal more fun than wearing a gown and washing your hands 50 times a day. Above, four more games from Infocom—STARCROSS, the ZORKs, THE WITNESS (new) and SUSPENDED. Infocom's games have no pictures but they don't lack humor. Try to arrest the front door in DEADLINE and you're told you'll look silly bringing a door to the police station.

up and won't even make the call. If you stand outside the door and listen in, you'll hear that she's talking but you won't be able to make out what she's saying. If you go into another room and pick up the extension, you can hear a little piece of the conversation before she realizes someone's on. The other alternative is that she would do the same thing but you wouldn't see it. Let's say you were outside when the phone rang. She'd still go up to the room and pick up the phone because she's motivated in a certain way.

EF: Life is going on whether you're there to observe it or not.

MB: That's right. Life is going on. You can interrupt it to a certain extent. By picking up the phone, you cause her to act differently than she would normally. In fact, she wouldn't go to her room and talk privately unless you were there.

EF: We were in the master bedroom when the phone rang. We picked it up and somebody picked up the extension. A voice I didn't recognize said something then they hung up. Later, the phone rang again and I ran downstairs and picked up the extension.

MB: The nice thing is that unlike other games, you really have a choice, and what you do really has an effect. You can ignore events or you can follow them up and the people are affected by your actions. For example, a letter arrives somewhere between 10 and 11 o'clock—it varies. It ends up being slid under the door. If you're standing in the foyer, you'll see this take place. If you're not there and you just walk by, you'll see the letter lying there. If you wait long enough, Mrs. Rourke, the housekeeper, will come by, take it to Mrs. Robner and hand it to her. However, you can intercept it. You can pick it up, look at it, put the letter back in the envelope and leave it at the door. Later on in the game, though, if you ask Mrs. Robner about it, she'll come down on you for opening her mail because she'll know you did it. The idea was to make people's reactions realistic.

EF: How difficult is it to make people in the game react realistically?

MB: It's very hard and no one can come up with all reactions on their own. That's why we have people testing the game. They'll say, "I tried this and I didn't get the response I expected," or "I should be able to..." and, if it's reasonable, we incorporate it. A lot of times it's very complicated. In *Deadline*, the will reading happens at noon. Now, you can prevent people from going where they want, to a certain extent, by talking to them. Sometimes they're more impatient than others and sometimes they won't even wait for you, but by doing different things it's possible to postpone the will reading from 12 o'clock to 12:40 depending on where everyone is and what they're doing. Coates, the lawyer, will wait until everyone is there. It's not hard-wired into the code that at 12:20 everyone will be there. People just can't jump from one room to another. They have to walk in sequence so if you're standing outside the living room at noon, you'll see one coming down the stairs, one coming out of the dining room, Coates driving up, etc. They'll all end up there but there's no one place in the code that says "Now we're going to move all the people to the will reading." They're all sort of at different times looking at their watches and effectively, realizing that they have to be there and then going there.

EF: It's like a slice of life that you've interrupted.

MB: Well, one of the differences between our games and others is we have made much more of an attempt—although it's still very primitive and it's hard to do anything really complicated on a microcomputer—to simulate a piece of the world. It's not just only one command working in only one place. In other games, if you're in a room and try a command, it might say, "You can't do that here." Even if you just said, "Look at umbrella," and it responded with "There's nothing unusual about the um-

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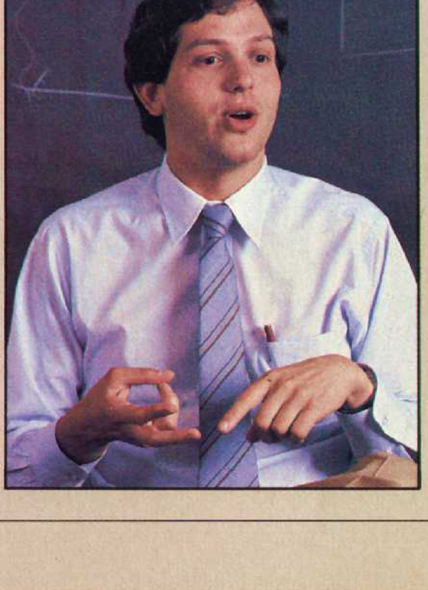

935
JENNER
USA

"All you've got to do is go a little higher, a little faster and a little farther than you've ever gone before."

Bruce Jenner, OLYMPIC DECATHLON GOLD MEDALIST

In The Activision Decathlon, designed by David Crane, you hit the screen running.

The moment you grab the joystick your heart races and so do you—running, jumping, vaulting and hurling like never before, through all ten decathlon events.

Amidst the pageantry of a colorful arena, you'll control incredibly realistic athletic motion. But whether you're going against your own record or up to three other athletes, you'll need all the speed and reflexes you've got to earn the gold.

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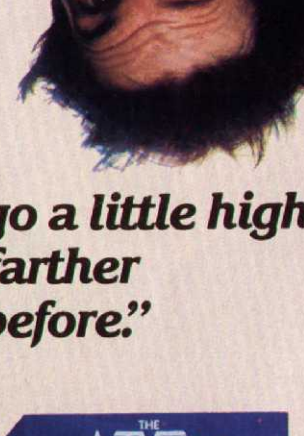
THE
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VIDEO GAME CARTRIDGE FOR THE
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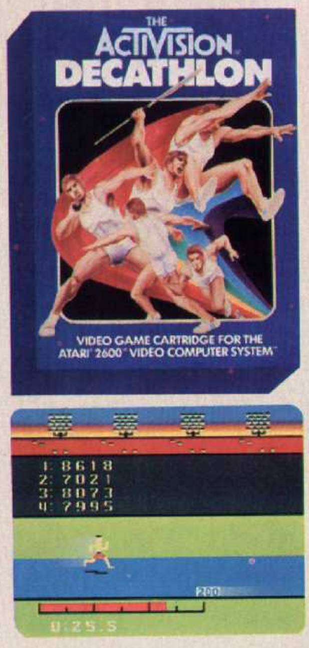
1: 8618
2: 7021
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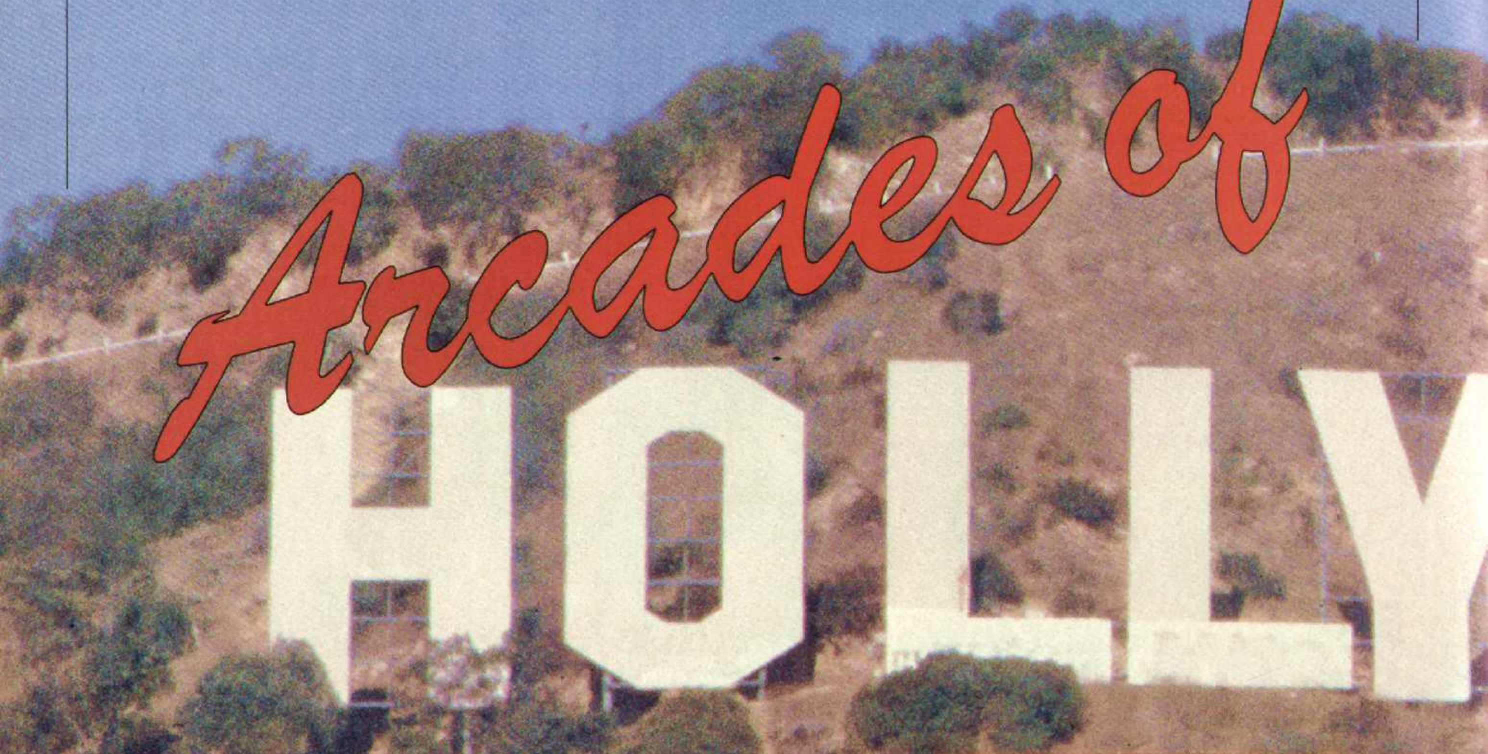
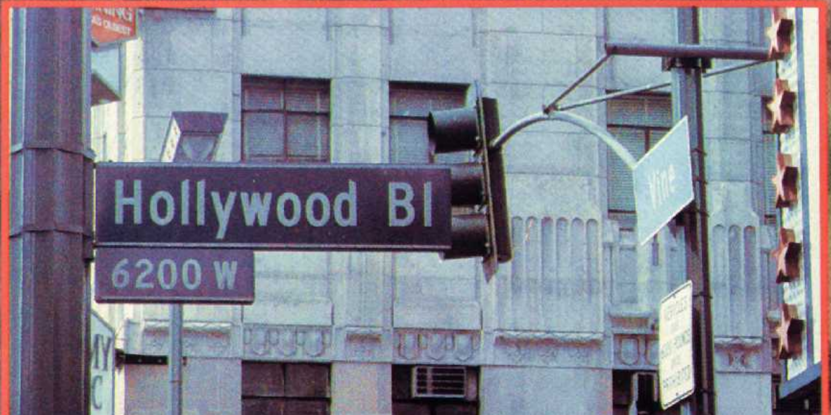
THE UNKNOWN ARCADER

Arcades of




Hollywood Bl
6200 W
Vine

KATHARINE HEPBURN

The typical token palaces of trendy Tinsel Town

Hollywood. It's a heartless town. Every day, thousands of young kids with ambition pour into the city hoping to become stars. Some do. Some don't. While they're waiting for their big break, what arcades do they frequent? UA went to find out.

I pulled into Hollywood, a stranger in a strange land. Getting the lowdown on the arcades was going to be tough without connections. There was only one thing to do—crash a Hollywood party.

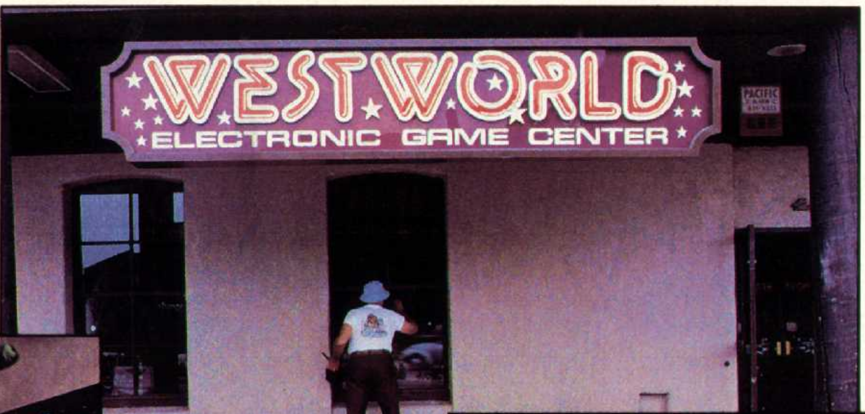
"Last year at this time I was a teen idol," the platinum blond boy told me as he sipped a Coors from the can. Jeremy Spicer was his

From left: Hollywood Boulevard where some of the biggest stars walked and (next) now are imbedded in cement; Paramount Studios and the logo from the Westworld arcade.

Paramount Pictures Corporation
STOP
ENTER

GAMES
WESTWORLD

name and he was a stuntman for the recently completed TV movie, *Trial by Terror*, starring Martin (*Mission Impossible*) Landau. I had infiltrated the "wrap" party and was looking to discover the arcades of the stars. Jeremy (whose favorite game was *Tempest*) recommended Westworld. I stuffed some hors d'oeuvres in my pocket and set out to find this celebrity arcade.



MAD PLANETS

Hooray for Hollywood. Westworld (this page) was the first stop. It's rumored Dustin Hoffman plays here. Playland (opposite page) is on the Santa Monica Pier. Parts of THE STING were filmed here.

There are actually two Westworlds but I checked out the one in Marina Del Rey. It's in a small shopping center, between The Yogurt Machine and UA Cinema. (Someday that "UA" will stand for Unknown Arcader instead of United Artists.)

I was greeted by the window washer who told me that he hadn't always been a window washer—in 1936 he played in Betty Boop's band. Everybody in L.A. has some connection to show biz.

Glass Managerie

The look of this spread is California laid-back, with hanging plants and exposed brick. But security is the name of the game. The cashier sits in a glass booth and talks to patrons through a speaker that makes him sound like an alien. He has three closed circuit TV monitors to keep tabs on the action anywhere in the arcade. And if that isn't enough, there's a hidden back office that would make James Bond jealous. Nestled in among the suede sofas is a master computer terminal which monitors every machine—how often it's played, for how long. It shows whether something's wrong with a game or if someone tries to break into it.

There were 102 machines with a lot of duplication: six *Centipede*, six *Galaga*, six *Ms. Pac-Man*, four *Pole Position*, four *Donkey Kong*. The newest offerings were the smash hit, *Gyruss*, *Mad Planets*, *Xevious*, *Pac-Man Plus* and *Arabian*. Rick, the muscular manager (formerly a stuntman in *Towering Inferno*, *Poseidon Adventure*, etc.) said that *Bubbles* and *Sinistar* had been there but didn't do very well, so they got the boot.

The owners, Steve Song and his father, were designers for World Wide Video before opening Westworld, and had created *Soccer Trio* and *Six Pack* among other games. Steve says that Atari and a few other companies test new games at Westworld; *Star Wars* had been there for awhile before its national release.

I scanned the scene for celebs but I didn't see any—only the Sparkletts Water delivery man, a regular who racked up 253,620 on *Xevious* as I watched. Rumor has it that Michael Landon has a little house in Marina Del Rey and brings his kids into Westworld from time to time. Dustin Hoffman has also played there and a scene from the movie *Making Love* was filmed there.

Mellow Profile

It was a mellow crowd, though they say the joint really jumps on the weekends. I noted a couple of high scores: *Joust*, 5,508,400 and *Ms. Pac-Man*, 63,920. Not bad. The most neglected machines were *Stargate* and *Robotron*. I reached in my pocket, soggy with hors d'oeuvres, and pulled out a quarter. I gave *Robotron* a run for old times sake.

PLAYLAND ARCADE

Playland, on the Santa Monica Pier, could have been a coin-op museum. It's been run by the same family, the Gordons, for almost 40 years, and I got the feeling they still had some of the original machines. They also had some of the newest, including *Kozmik Kroozer*, *Champion Baseball*, *Zoo Keeper*, *Bagman*, *Bubbles*, *Gyruss* and *Mario Brothers*. It's a huge, crowded and noisy plywood palace, festooned with Skeeball prizes, and smelling of sweat and Coppertone. Roller skaters and skateboarders careen down the aisles like characters in a maze game.

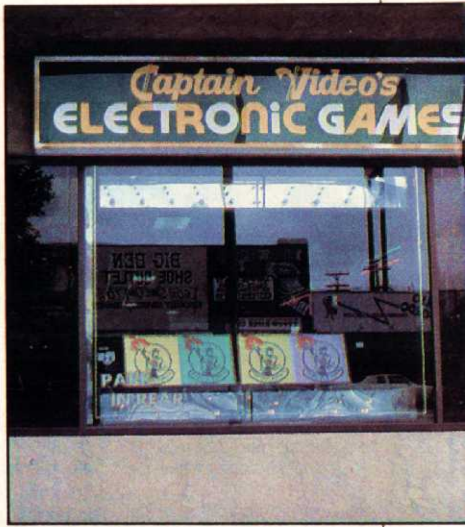
If these walls could talk . . . they probably couldn't be heard. That's okay though, because they exude history—the way L.A. sidewalks seem to give off heat. Over 100 movies have been filmed at Playland from *The Sting* to *Blood Beach*. In the late Sixties it was a hangout for motorcycle gangs. These days it's a wholesome boardwalk attraction pulling in a mixed and spirited crowd. Blue-haired punks, Latin lovers and sunburned tourists play side by side.

I took a stroll down Memory Lane. There was *Vibrant*, the foot stimulator, a mechanical arm wrestler, and *Peek Into the Nudist Colony*. (I was too embarrassed to look.) A black and white Atari *Basketball* looked as good as new. There was the helicopter game, *Armor Attack* by Cinematronics, *King & Balloon* from Game Plan, *Monster Bash*, *Targ*, *Thief*, *Pleiades*, *Swimmer*, *Naughty Boy* and *Robby Roto*, all token operated. I played a few leaky rounds of Nichibutsu's *Frisky Tom*, a game in which a metal-eating mouse wrecks your plumbing.

A few machines had price tags on them. *Venture* was a bargain at $500. Going strong were *Pole Position* (natch) and *Super Pac-Man*. Also hot were *Joust* and *Q**Bert*. High scores showed: *Gyruss*, 94,650; *Centipede*, 523,743; *Slither*, 109,600; *BurgerTime*, 2,800.

I could have stayed all day, taking an occasional dip in the blue Pacific, but I had not yet seen even one celebrity, and there were more arcades to explore. I peeled onto the freeway and headed for new horizons.

Captain Video on Pico Boulevard in Westwood looks like just another



storefront with wheelchair accessibility. But inside there's more action than in a Japanese car factory. There are close to 100 machines in long rows and clusters under neon lights. The changemaker sits in a booth at the back. This was the first place in L.A. I saw *Krull*, *Congo Bongo* or *Bump 'n' Jump*. Other new machines were *Gyruss*, *Mad Planets*, a sit-down *Star Trek*, *Champion Baseball*, *Cosmic Chasm*, *Sinistar*, *Bagman*, *Arabian* and *Buck Rogers*.

CAPTAIN VIDEO'S GAMES

UCLA is nearby so there are collegiates as well as the lunchtime business crowd and the neighborhood kids, who are remarkably polite. They all say "please" when they ask for quarters.

Alan, the cashier, was from London: "Some of the young lads are real crafty; they'll last an hour or so on one quarter. Then they'll offer to clean up for you so you'll give them a free game."

Alan also pointed out a few racquetball enthusiasts who play *Centipede* for practice.

Mommie Deadest

WAIT! Was that Joan Crawford climbing into that *Tailgunner*? No, she's dead. It was just some hippy with broad shoulders. Alan said stars do grace the place now and then. Gary Coleman has played there. And some commercials have been shot at the Cap'n.

One unusual feature was a second monitor on *Mario Brothers* for spectators. There was also a sign on *Pole Position* showing maximum speeds for each curve and other strategy tips. (All the driving games are faves in L.A.)

As at Westworld, the newer games get tested at Captain Video. Nichibutsu's *Rug Rats* was there a couple of times in several different disguises and *Radical Radial* (about a tire, what else?) rolled in for preproduction evaluation.

Occasionally play-offs are held there. At one time the world's record for *Centipede* was scored at Captain Video. Like a good neighborhood arcade, the Captain sponsors Little League baseball and soccer teams and participates in scholarship programs. I left this tidy, apple-pie place with a craving to get married, have 2.3 children and a station wagon. But no! Not for this rambling guy—not for a man with a mission. I pointed my sneakers in the direction of Hollywood Boulevard. If I couldn't find the perfect arcade there, I might at least get a glimpse of some stars. Who knows—maybe I would be discovered. I could envision a whole series of Unknown Arcader movies: *I Was a Teenage Arcader*, *Beach Blanket Arcader*, *The Unknown Arcader Meets Godzilla*.

Well, the arcades of Hollywood Boulevard are anything but glamorous. The equipment was beat up and I felt lucky I wasn't. At

one of the arcades, the newest machine was *Mr. Do.* There was a price war going on among the more ambitious establishments. One joint offered seven tokens for a dollar. So the arcade next door offered two games for a quarter. *Super Breakout* and *Dazzler* were only a nickel. (Remember *Dazzler*? A maze game with a gorilla and a banana.) In spite of the animosity of the managers, the kids in the arcades were friendly and accomplished on their battered videos and pinballs.

Armen, a handsome neighborhood prince, does odd jobs for two of the arcades and is a virtuoso on any machine you name, from *Tuni* to *Dark Warriors* to *Nato Defense*, esoteric games all. His rollerskating friend Eddie, a recent graduate of Hollywood High and a *Stargate* freak, is only peripherally involved in the arcade scene. He just got a job in a health food store and doesn't miss the "lots of fights" that take place in some of the Hollywood arcades.

They say the movie stars are in Hollywood (though I never saw so much as a twinkle), but the video game stars are in Upland, just west of Cucamonga. (Yes, Virginia, there really is a Cucamonga!)

Starship Video! on Foothill Road in Upland is well worth the extra freeway miles it takes to get there. It's the most player-oriented arcade this whizkid has seen, from the bike racks out front to the freeplay periods on Saturday mornings. There are also contests with prizes like home computers and tickets to the US Festival. There's a 500-member club which entitles card-holders to free tokens; there are dance parties, weekly discounts and a scoreboard with national standings.

The kinky facade looks like a section of a space ship wedged into a shopping center. The multi-level interior looks like the bridge of the Starship Enterprise. There's a gigantic TV screen which was showing the movie *Tron* when I beamed in. Usually, though, the VJ shows rock videos. Any game screen can also be projected onto the mammoth monitor.

Here I was among peers. Playing *Chexx* was Gary Hatt, who held the highest score (2,155,800) on *Star Trek* in the country, and

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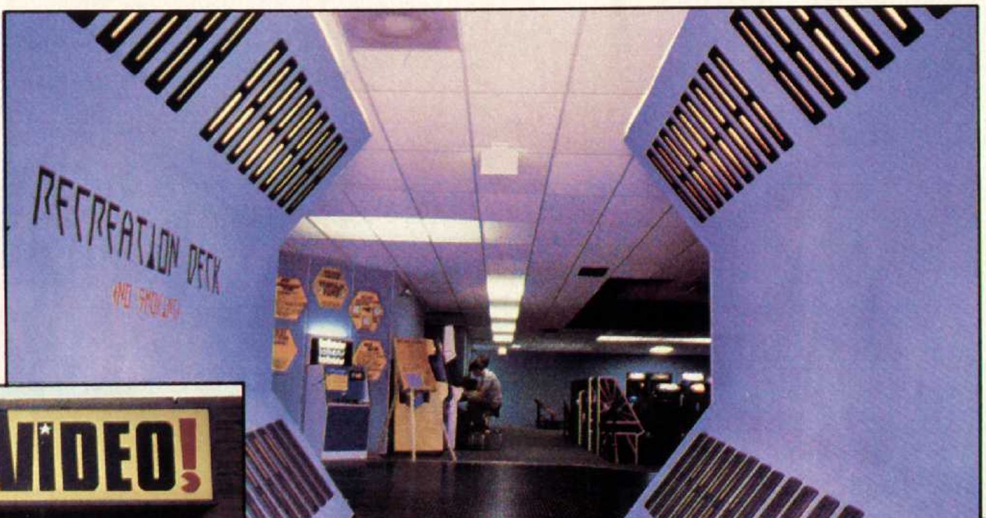
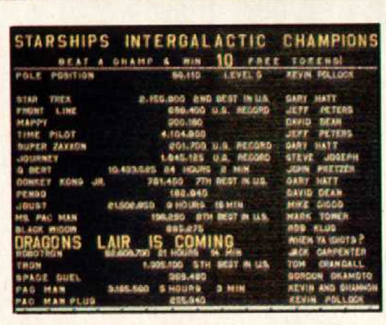


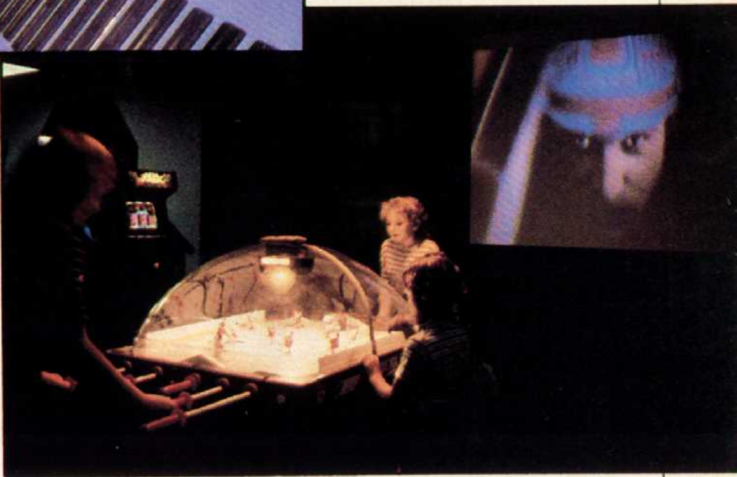
BANK OF ANDROMEDA



STARSHIPS INTERGALACTIC CHAMPIONS

BEAT A CHAMP & WIN 10 FREE TOKENS!

POLE POSITION	98,110	LEVEL 5	KEVIN POLLOCK
STAR TREK	2,155,800	2ND BEST IN U.S.	GARY HATT
FRONT LINE	898,400	U.S. RECORD	JEFF PETERS
MAPPY	200,180		DAVID DEAN
TIME PILOT	4,104,900		JEFF PETERS
SUPER ZAXXON	201,700	U.S. RECORD	GARY HATT
JOURNEY	1,845,185	U.S. RECORD	STEVE JOSEPH
Q BERT	10,403,685	84 HOURS 2 MIN	JOHN PRETZER
DONKEY KONG JR.	781,400	7TH BEST IN U.S.	GARY HATT
PENGO	182,940		DAVID DEAN
JOUST	21,000,850	9 HOURS 15 MIN	MIKE GIGOO
MS. PAC MAN	196,290	8TH BEST IN U.S.	MARK TOMER
BLACK WIDOW	885,275		ROB KLUG
DRAGONS LAIR IS COMING			WHEN YA GOTTA?
ROBOTRON	52,808,700	21 HOURS 54 MIN	JACK CARPENTER
TRON	1,995,100	5TH BEST IN U.S.	TOM CRANDALL
SPACE DUEL	389,480		GORDON OKAMOTO
PAC MAN	3,185,500	5 HOURS 3 MIN	KEVIN AND SHANNON
PAC MAN PLUS	255,040		KEVIN POLLOCK



On opposite page, Captain Video's where UA did NOT see Joan Crawford get into TAILGUNNER but where it's said Gary Coleman often plays. This page, Starship Video! the most player-oriented arcade UA ever saw.

SUPERS

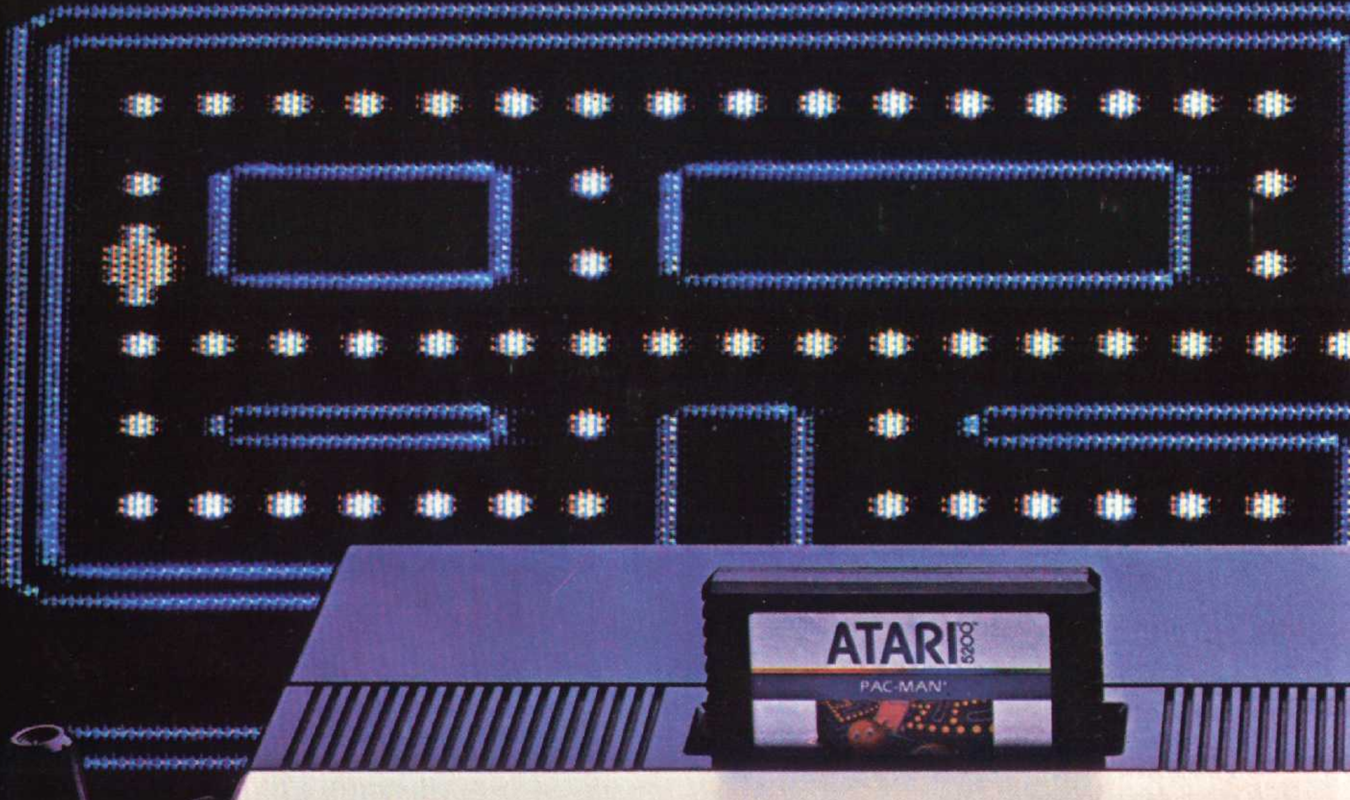
Its arcade games look and sound so real it seems an illusion to have them at home.

Its sports games are so lifelike you could end up with sore muscles and a hoarse throat.

In fact, everything about the ATARI® 5200™ SuperSystem is designed to make your wildest expectations seem tame.

Its arcade-quality cartridges can't be played on any other system, not even with an adaptor.

Hits like PAC-MAN,[1] Centipede,™ Galaxian,[2] Star Raiders,™ Missile Command,™ Football and Soccer are here now. Others like Pole



This is the ATARI® 5200™ SuperSystem. The most versatile, controllable and enjoyable video game system you can buy.

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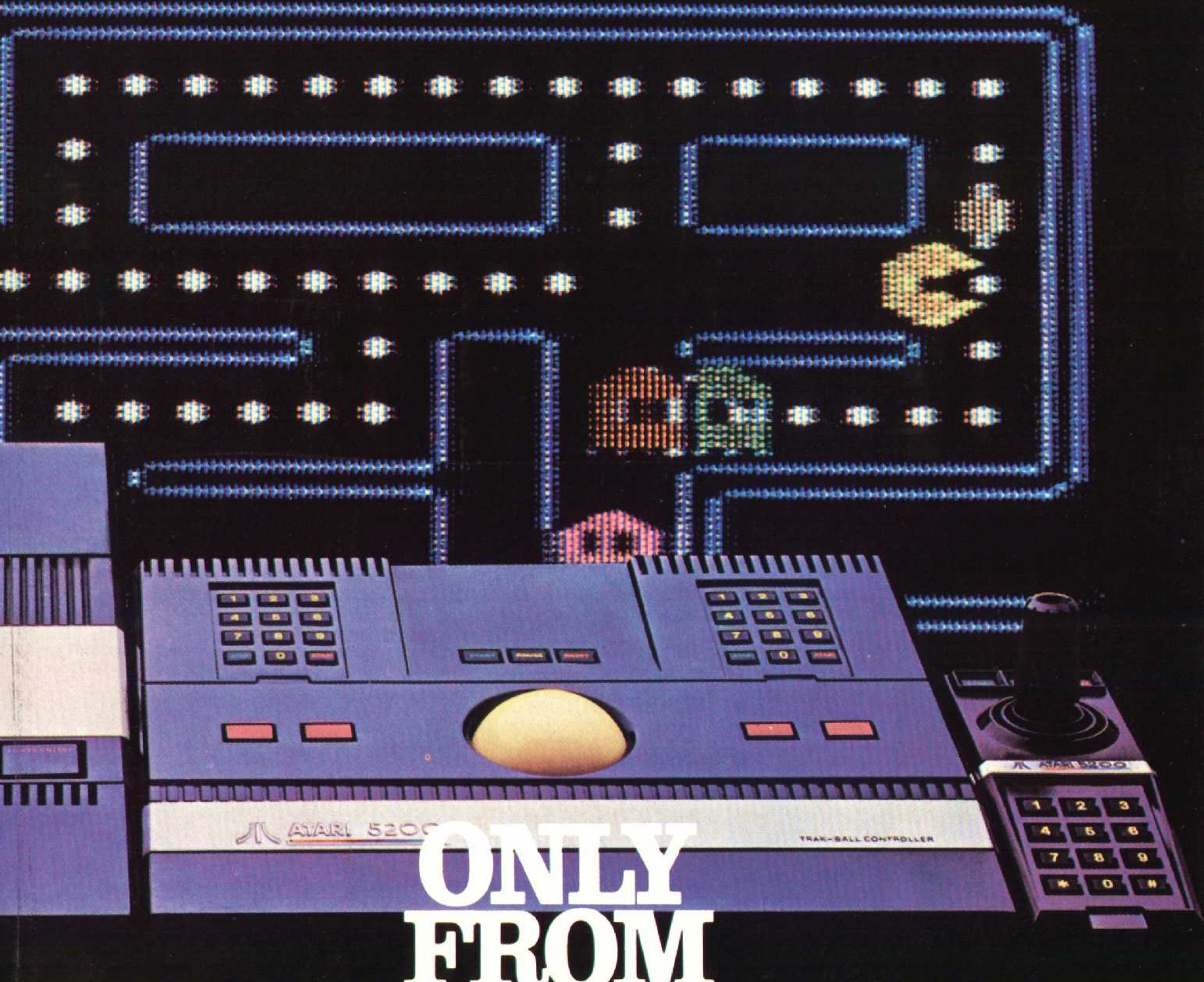
SYSTEM

Position,[3] Dig Dug,™[4] Kangaroo,™[5] Jungle Hunt,[6] Tennis, and Baseball are coming soon.

Its controllers have the only 360° joysticks on the market. A 12-position keypad. Plus start, reset, and the only pause button, all conveniently right in your hand.

Coming soon is a TRAK-BALL™ controller. An adaptor for ATARI 2600™ games. Even cartridges with human-sounding voice.

Compare the ATARI 5200™ with anything else and you'll see why we call it the Super-System. Because that's exactly what it is.



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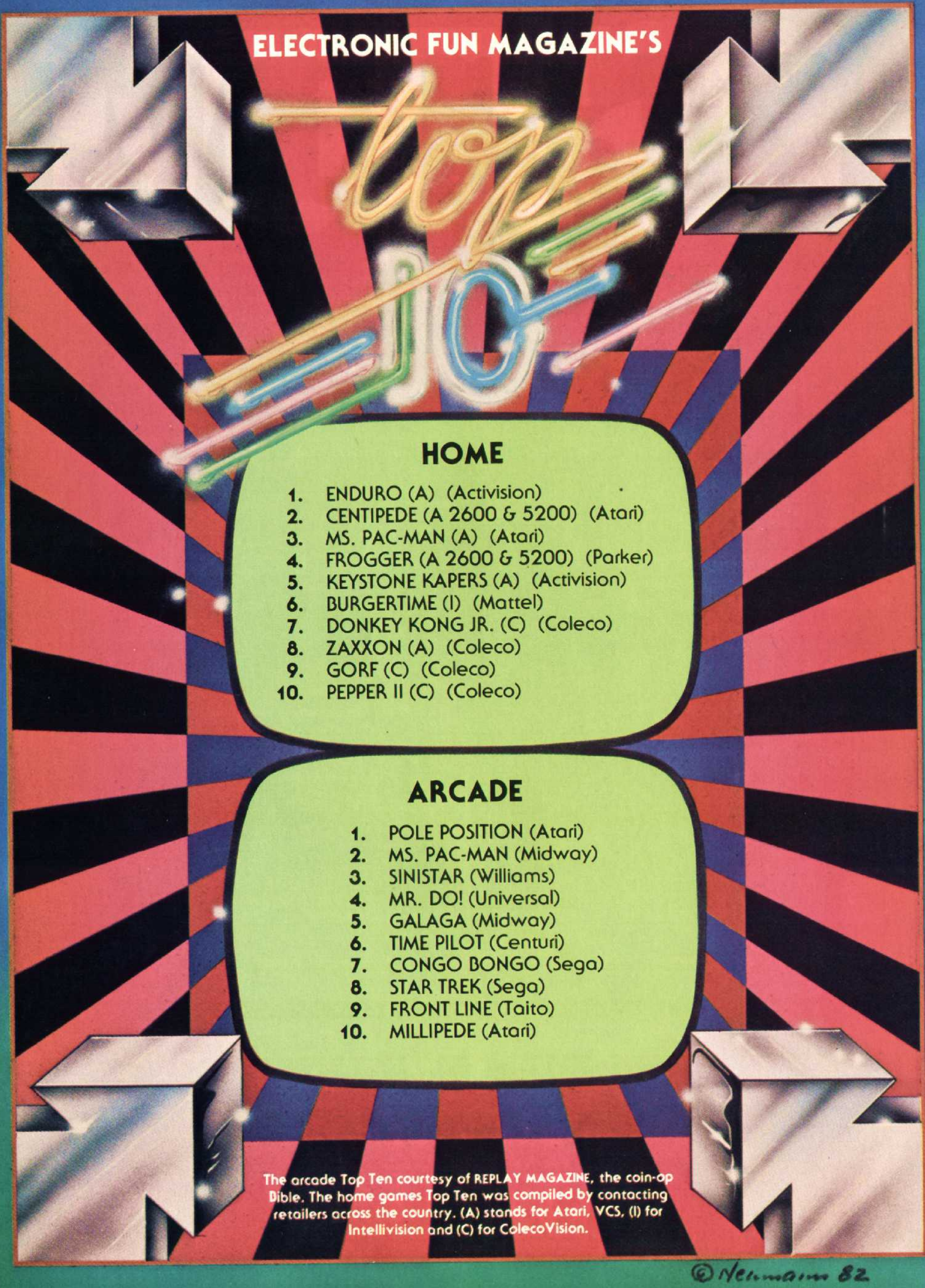
ELECTRONIC FUN MAGAZINE'S



HOME

1. ENDURO (A) (Activision)
2. CENTIPEDE (A 2600 & 5200) (Atari)
3. MS. PAC-MAN (A) (Atari)
4. FROGGER (A 2600 & 5200) (Parker)
5. KEYSTONE KAPERS (A) (Activision)
6. BURGERTIME (I) (Mattel)
7. DONKEY KONG JR. (C) (Coleco)
8. ZAXXON (A) (Coleco)
9. GORF (C) (Coleco)
10. PEPPER II (C) (Coleco)

ARCADE

1. POLE POSITION (Atari)
2. MS. PAC-MAN (Midway)
3. SINISTAR (Williams)
4. MR. DO! (Universal)
5. GALAGA (Midway)
6. TIME PILOT (Centuri)
7. CONGO BONGO (Sega)
8. STAR TREK (Sega)
9. FRONT LINE (Taito)
10. MILLIPEDE (Atari)

The arcade Top Ten courtesy of REPLAY MAGAZINE, the coin-op Bible. The home games Top Ten was compiled by contacting retailers across the country. (A) stands for Atari, VCS, (I) for Intellivision and (C) for ColecoVision.

HERE'S WHAT MAKES THE ATARI® 5200™ SUPERSYSTEM SO SUPER.

First off, it really is a system. A family of ATARI 5200™ Super-System components designed together to perform together.

Which is what any video gamer should look for.

It's also an exclusive system. You can't play its high-resolution, arcade-speed 5200™ Super Games on anything else, not even with an adaptor.

And what's coming includes the most popular games, like Joust[1] and Pole Position[2] now in the arcades.

ATARI 5200™ SUPERSYSTEM

It comes with a powerful 16K RAM (memory) built in. Which is 10 times more intelligent than Intellivision.™

It generates 256 colors, compared with Colecovision's 16. And 320 lines of graphic resolution, a good 25% sharper than Colecovision.™

Its circuitry reads signals fast. So with 5200 arcade cartridges, nothing gets lost in translation. Including game speed.

What's more, the controllers actually feel good in your hand. With solid joysticks, not clumsy little disks.

And the action is full-circle, 360°. Instead of 16 or 8 positions like other joysticks.

There are left- and right-handed fire buttons. A 12-digit keypad. Plus start and reset all in your hand.

There's even a pause button, in case the phone rings. And it rings a lot when you have an ATARI 5200 SuperSystem.

Everyone wants to come over and play.

ATARI 5200™ TRAK-BALL™ CONTROLLER

If you know video games, you know what TRAK-BALL is. The fastest controller in the arcades.

And now for the ATARI 5200 SuperSystem.

It gives Centipede,™ Galaxian,[3] Missile Command™ and other 5200 SuperSystem games true arcade feel and control.

And turns our new RealSports™ games into real athletic workouts.

ATARI TRAK-BALL is mounted in a hefty base so it won't slip or slide around in heavy use.

All other controls are built right in. With fire buttons and keypads for both lefties and righties.

You just plug it into your ATARI 5200 SuperSystem and let the good times roll.

ATARI VCS™ CARTRIDGE ADAPTOR

This handy device gives you the best of both worlds.

It lets you play all the great ATARI 2600™ VCS games—like Asteroids,™ Berzerk,[4] Yars' Revenge,™ the Swordquest™ series—as well as the new 5200™ Super Games, all on one SuperSystem.

ATARI 5200™ VOICE

Speaking of video games, that's exactly what some ATARI 5200 games will do.

Generate a human-sounding voice in response to gameplay.

To guide you. To warn you. Maybe even to scare you a little.

Adding a whole new dimension of video game realism and fun.

ATARI 5200™ SUPER GAMES

Centipede,™ Vanguard,[5] PAC-MAN,[6] Galaxian, Qix,[7] Star Raiders,™ Football, Baseball, Soccer, and Tennis are here now.

Pole Position, Joust, Moon Patrol,[1] Jungle Hunt,[8] Tempest,™ Battlezone,® Dig Dug,™[9] Xevious,[2] and Pengo[10] are coming soon.

With 5200 graphics, gameplay and sound, in cartridges that no other system, nor their adaptors, can play.

And they're the hottest games now in arcades.

Choose Colecovision or Intellivision and you'll never play them at home.

It's that simple.

So think ahead to the games you'll want to play.

We're pretty certain which system you'll want to buy.

ATARI 5200
BASEBALL
ATARI 5200
KANGAROO
ATARI 5200
PAC-MAN
ATARI 5200
DEFENDER

ATARI 5200
CENTIPEDE

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Gamers, start your engines

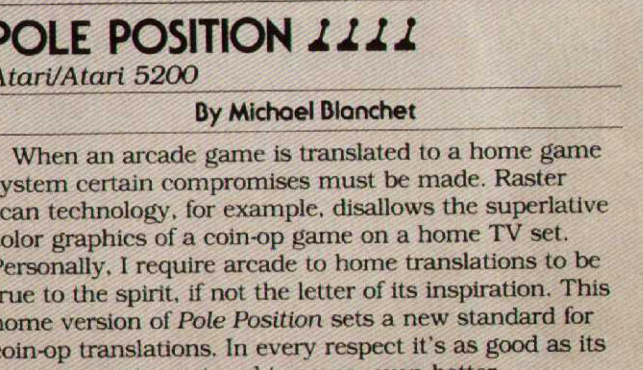
POLE POSITION 🕹️🕹️🕹️🕹️

Atari/Atari 5200

By Michael Blanchet

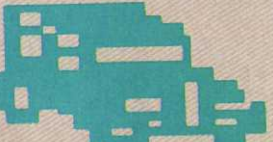
When an arcade game is translated to a home game system certain compromises must be made. Raster scan technology, for example, disallows the superlative color graphics of a coin-op game on a home TV set. Personally, I require arcade to home translations to be true to the spirit, if not the letter of its inspiration. This home version of *Pole Position* sets a new standard for coin-op translations. In every respect it's as good as its coin-op counterpart and in some, even better.

To describe *Pole Position* as just another driving game would be an injustice. Insofar as play mechanics are concerned, it is just like any other driving game.



The object, of course, is to complete the qualifying lap in as short a time as possible. If you finish the qualifying run in less than 73 seconds, you are assigned a starting position in the Grand Prix. The most desirable slot is the pole position (front row, inside lane).

What separates *Pole Position* from the rest of the pack is the game's unique graphic perspective. Instead of looking down from behind at a 45-degree angle (as in *Turbo*, for example), you view the race from behind your car as if you were being towed along in a little U-Haul trailer. This coupled with the almost hypnotic scrolling of the screen gives a sensation of speed unmatched by any game on any home system. Personally, I never felt *Pole Position* could be authentically reproduced as a home cartridge. Much to my surprise, virtually nothing was lost in the translation to the home medium. This game is testament to Atari's claim of the 5200's superior graphic capabilities.



I do have a few complaints with the controllers. Since both shifting and steering are controlled by the joystick it is not uncommon to downshift unintentionally while trying to negotiate one of the course's many sharp turns. Unless you happen to notice a drop in speed you could very well plod along at half steam without ever knowing it. The side mounted action buttons are passable as both brake and accelerator, but a lot of the thrill of driving is lost simply because the stick is used in lieu of a steering wheel. Granted, if you are accustomed to the 5200 controller you should find that it doesn't detract from the game to any great degree.

Unlike the coin-op version, 5200 *Pole Position* offers you a choice of four different courses. Well, they're not exactly different in terms of layout. The distinction here is that one course is harder than the previous and so on. The player can also select the length of each race.

If any fault could be found with the coin-op version, it would be the duration of a typical game. Even the most seasoned of drivers only get two or three minutes for their quarter. Furthermore, you can't really practice unmolested in the coin-op format. The home version, on the other hand, does offer you the option of a practice run. In this mode no other cars will appear on the track. *Pole Position* is the closest thing to real racing available on any home game system.

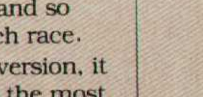
Pull the joystick toward you while driving to prevent accidental downshifting.

SAFECRACKER 🕹️🕹️🕹️

Imagic/Intellivision

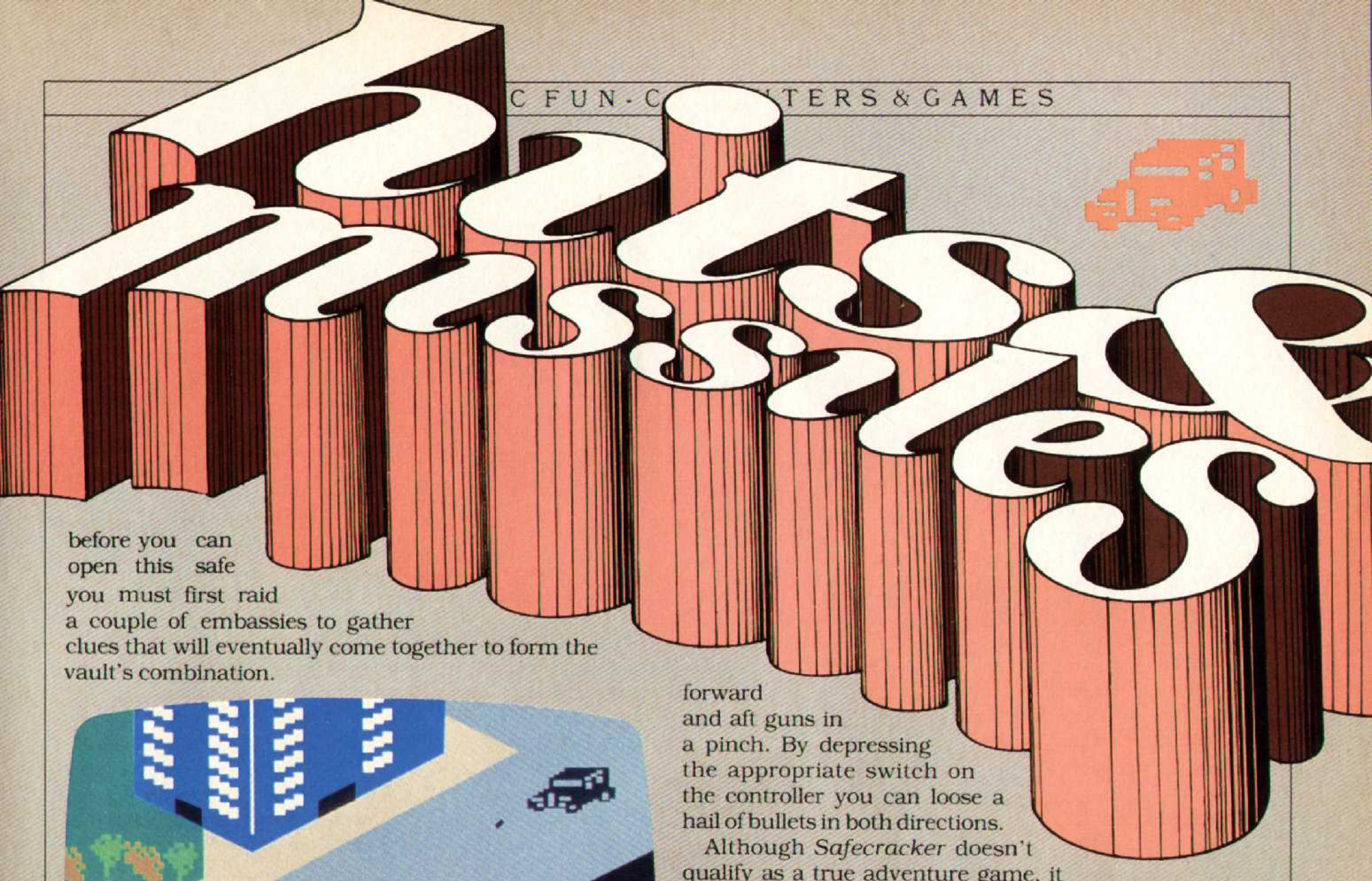
By Michael Blanchet

Contrary to the impression you might get from its title, *Safecracker* does not cast you as a bad guy. You're a thief all right, but you work for the government. This means that you can steal whatever you want whenever you feel like it.

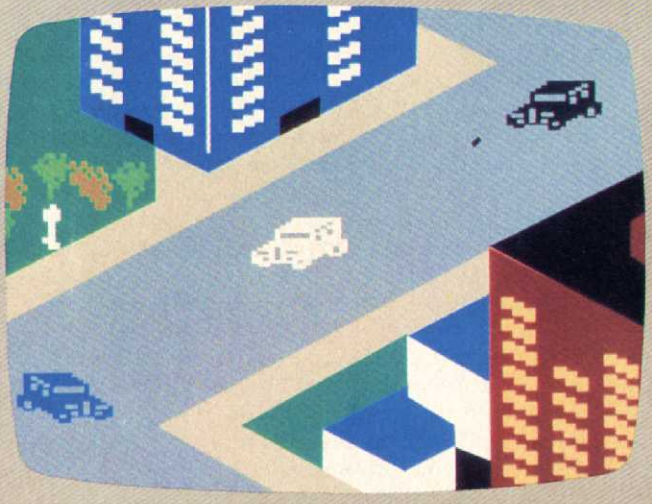


As the Safecracker in our story, you are out on a sensitive diplomatic mission in a foreign country. Spy work as it is depicted here is nothing like it is in, say, a James Bond movie. In comparison to the covert and subversive methodology commonly associated with being a spy, *Safecracker* is relatively straightforward. Nevertheless it has retained some of the spirit that makes an intrigue yarn fun and exciting.

Your ultimate goal in *Safecracker* is to gain access to the Treasury vault. In it is a stash of gold bullion. But



before you can open this safe you must first raid a couple of embassies to gather clues that will eventually come together to form the vault's combination.



To move from embassy to embassy you use a spy's favorite toy—a car. In this case you'll be driving a sedan, circa 1930. As you cruise the boulevards in search of embassies to plunder, the playfield scrolls, *Zaxxon*-style. Thus, you view your movements from an overhead but slightly twisted perspective as if you were trailing behind in a helicopter. I don't know how they pulled it off, but the graphics really work. There's true depth here as I've never seen it before.

To locate an embassy you must observe the outer edges of the screen. The color of the border corresponds to the direction your target lies in relation to your present position. Green, for instance means head southeast while blue is your cue to head southwest.

Once you have found the embassy you have 30 seconds to open the safe. If you cannot decipher the combination in time you can always blow it up. Doing so will, however, bring the Secret Police out of hiding. (This is the good part.) Now your driving skills will be put to the test. At first, avoiding the Secret Police will be difficult, thanks to the finicky nature of the Intellivision controller. With a little practice though, driving becomes a bit easier. You may find the chase sequences the best part of the game. Defensive driving is the key here but you can always fall back on your forward and aft guns in a pinch. By depressing the appropriate switch on the controller you can loose a hail of bullets in both directions.

Although *Safecracker* doesn't qualify as a true adventure game, it does offer a certain degree of cerebral challenge. At the same time it's a real-time adventure, unhampered by complicated instructions and commands common to most Intellivision games of this type.

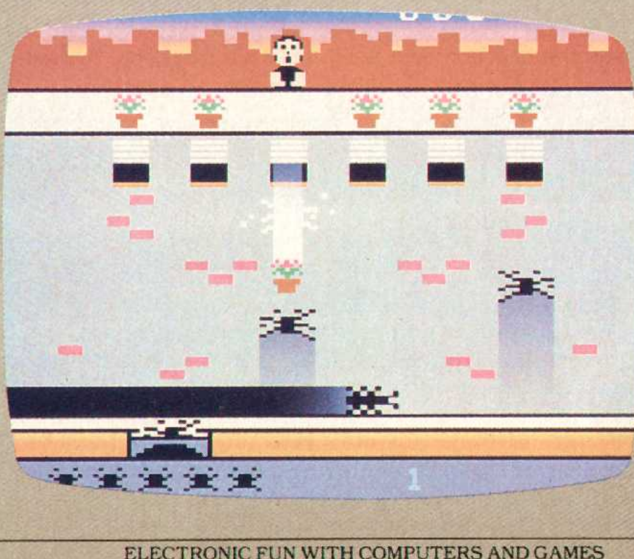
> When possible, avoid using dynamite to open the safe. It brings the Secret Police a-runnin'.

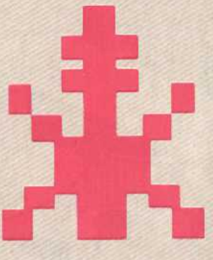
CRACKPOTS

Activision/Atari VCS

By George Kopp

When we first heard about *Crackpots* we thought it sounded like a *Kaboom!* clone. Why would Activision clone one of its own most popular games, we wondered.





Imagine our surprise when we played *Crackpots* and found it *was* a *Kaboom!* clone. But at least we discovered why they did it. It's still a lot of fun.

In *Crackpots* you're a homeowner beset by termites. They crawl out of a hole in your garden, climb the walls of your house and enter through your open windows. There's only one way to stop these noxious beasts—drop flowerpots on them. There you are on the roof, moving back and forth dropping pots, of which you have a never ending supply.

Since you obviously don't have to worry about running out of ammunition, there's got to be some other element which puts limitations on your game, right? There is. Bugs. The bugs in *Crackpots* present you with the problem of the incredible shrinking house.

The bugs come in a variety of colors, corresponding to several exotic subspecies of the genus *Chompus foundatious*. Black bugs move in straight lines (the well-known *Duckus sittens*). Blue bugs wiggle (*Chubbus checkens*). Red and green bugs are sneaky little devils (*Lousiorum deviens*) and make more fancy moves than Herschel Walker. If you fail to eliminate enough bugs they eat away at your house. This causes the whole upper story to drop a level, giving you less time to bean the next wave of insects.

There really isn't much more to say about *Crackpots*—it's a good old fashioned video game, if you can speak of video games being old fashioned. As you'd expect, the insects get faster and more numerous as the game progresses, and eventually you lose.

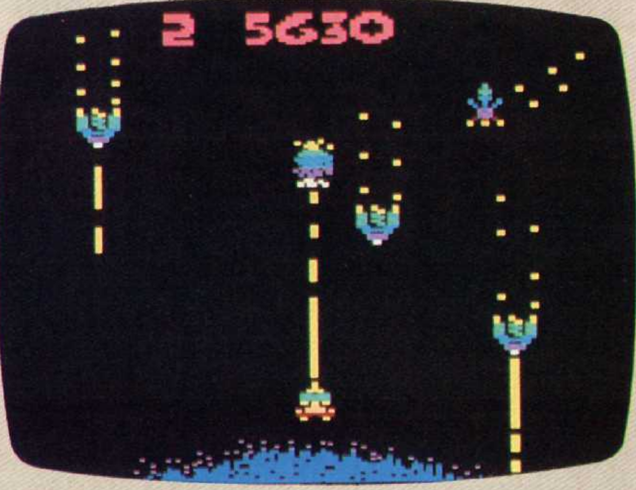
At this point it's probably time to make some deep observations about video games and life, or to point out the educational aspects of *Crackpots*, or to give some tips on the care and feeding of house plants. Frankly, *Crackpots* has numbed my mind with its simpleminded lack of purpose. This is not an unpleasant experience—I recommend it.

The green bugs always veer at the last second to the opposite direction from which they are travelling. The red bugs keep on a straight—but slanted—course.

SOLAR STORM

Imagic/Atari VCS

By Michael Blanchet



Sad but true—any game designed for the Atari VCS must conform to relatively incomplete parameters. In simple English this means there is only so much that can be done with the available computing space. It looks to me like Imagic has milked the Atari VCS for all it's worth and now has no alternative but to rehash and repackage old ideas under the guise of a new title.

That brings us to another sad truth—the storyline of any game designed for the VCS is pure hogwash. The title and text used on product packaging to pique consumer interest seldom has anything to do with what you see on the screen.

Such is the case here. The *Solar Storm* scenario is strictly off-the-shelf stuff. Supposedly strapped into a laser ship you are now hovering over the surface of some unnamed planet. Suddenly from overhead, scores of hostile ships and solar debris begin to rain down on you. If the planet beneath you absorbs one too many of these bits of refuse, it will overheat and explode. Your job is to play thermostat and see that this doesn't happen.

To repel this bombardment simply slide to and fro and fire back at them. When your score passes a 500-point increment, the round ends and your ship is transported to the orbital platform sequence. Positioned at center screen, your job here is to knock out as many fleet ships as possible within a given time period. Hit five before time expires and you'll receive an additional laser. Regardless of the outcome of this sequence, you'll return to the planet's surface when time expires.

Before we go on plotting the similarities between this game and a hundred others, I think it only fair to shed some light on some of *Solar Storm's* unique features. First of all, this game is fast. So frenetic, even manic, is the pacing that gamers may find it trance-inducing at times. Secondly, the player uses the paddle controller as opposed to a joystick. This device—quick and responsive—allows the player to govern the speed of his movements and dovetails well with the brisk on-screen action.

I have no complaint with the graphics. Although I wouldn't go so far as to say that *Solar Storm* meets or exceeds Activision standards, it is, nonetheless, about as pretty a picture as one could paint on the VCS.

A now-defunct Imagic ad campaign said their (Imagic's) games were "created by experts for experts." *Solar Storm* is one of these games. It is by no means easy. Chances are, though, that you've played it before, only the name is different this time around.

Shoot the Sizzloids when the screen is full of debris.

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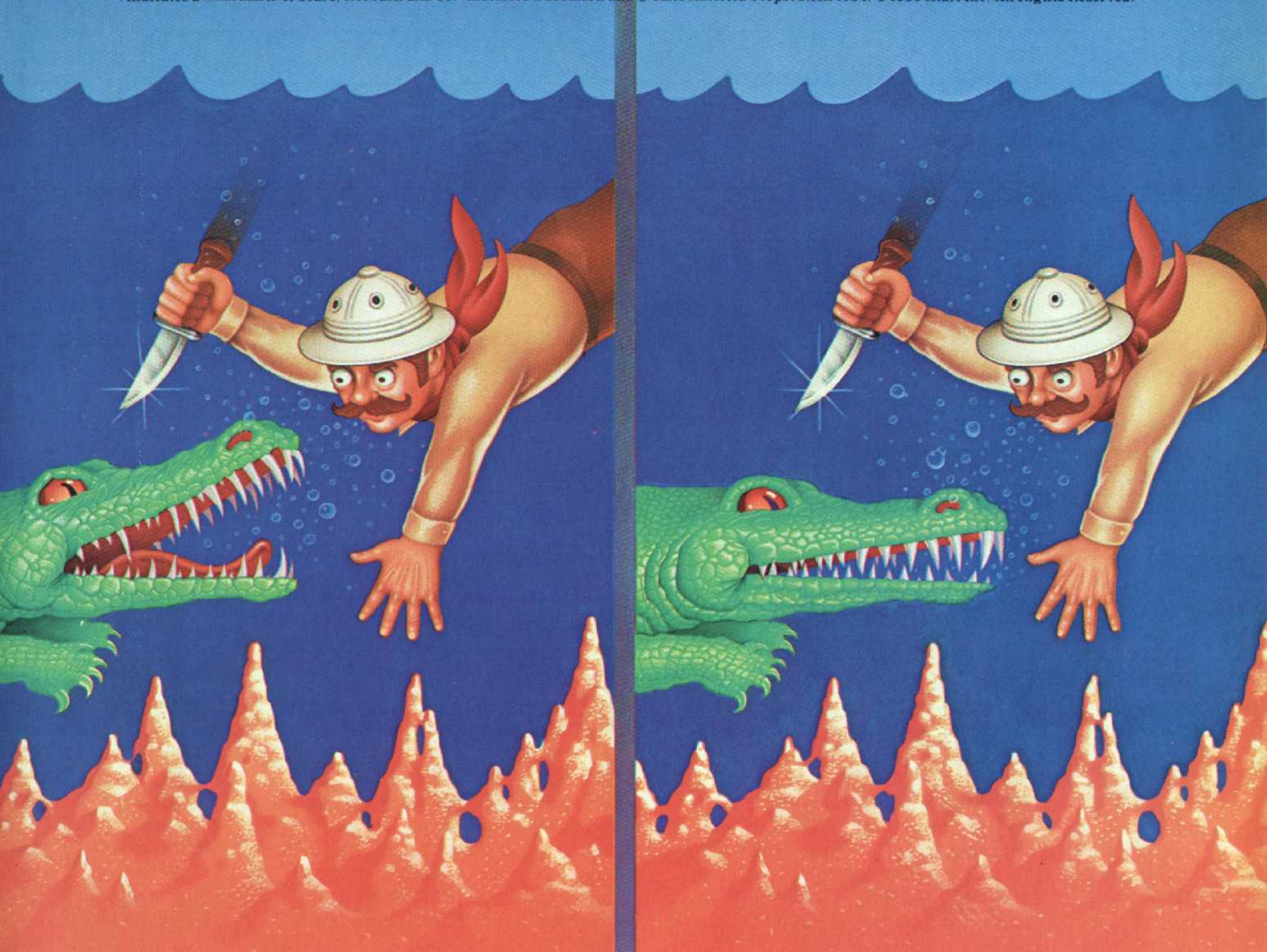


Which player is snatching victory from the jaws of defeat?

Find out fast. Jungle Hunt is so much like the arcade, you can't go in green. Like the player on the left. He'll get snapped up by the crocodile with the wide open mouth. But get the croc with the partly open mouth and score 200 points, like the player on the right.

Only Atari makes Jungle Hunt for use with the ATARI® 2600™ Game, Sears Video Arcade† systems, and a version exclusively for the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

So explore the stores for Jungle Hunt. And learn it like a native.

ATARI
JUNGLE HUNT
ATARI

Here comes Jungle Hunt* from Atari.

A Warner Communications Company

TRON MAZE-A-TRON

Mattel/Intellivision

By Noel Steere

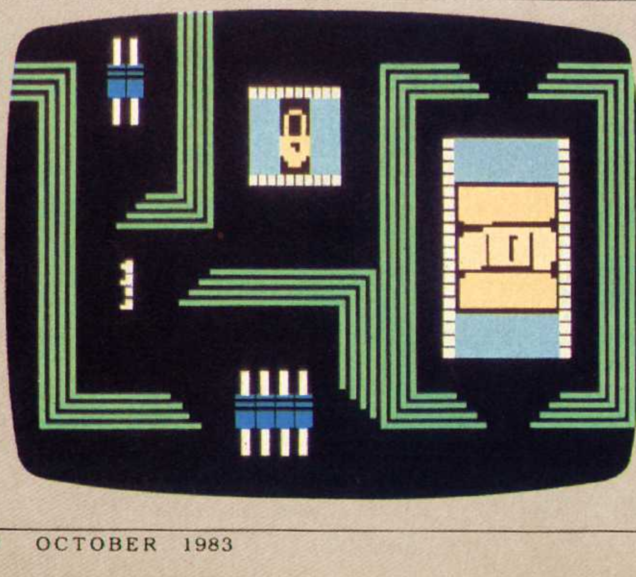
Mattel is famous for super-complicated games that cannot be mastered in a split second. Everyone likes a challenge, but it should come in the gameplay, not in understanding the instructions. This is the trouble with *Tron Maze-A-Tron*.

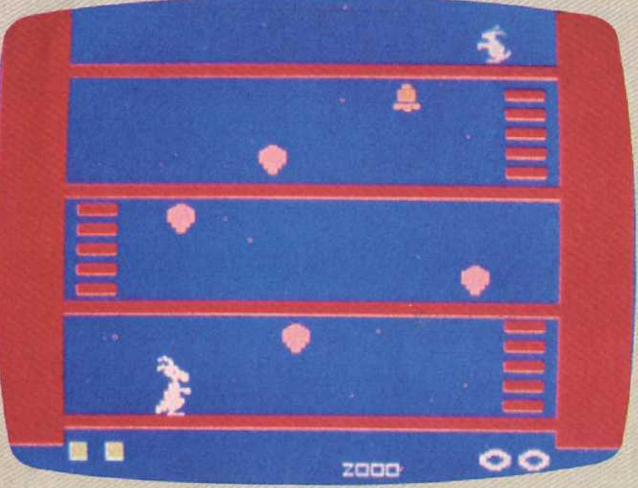
Yet another in the series of games based on the Disney picture, *Maze-A-Tron* puts you inside a computer. As you journey through the maze of microcomponents you have to locate the RAM chips and turn the numbers on them to black zeroes. Changing them isn't hard—finding them is. You must spend what seems like hours running around looking for chips, and all the while the maze is moving. Move off screen and you have to begin your search all over again from the start. In addition you must be on your guard for enemies such as Recognizers and Zaps.

If you're lucky enough to survive this phase, it's time to go head-to-head with the evil MCP (or Master Control Program, if you remember your Tron lexicon). In this round you've got to use your cursor to shoot bit pairs which have numbers that match the numbers on the side of the screen. And if all this number recognition isn't enough to keep you busy, you've also got to avoid being hit by the MCP's eye blasts. Get zapped three times and it's curtains. If you complete this phase you get to start all over again from the beginning.

The graphics, as we've come to expect from Mattel, are outstanding but graphics can't subsitute for flawed gameplay. Unfortunately, *Maze-A-Tron* is boring.

If there's one Recognizer on the screen, another one won't come in. Use this to your advantage.





KANGAROO

Atari/Atari VCS

By Charles Ardai

I have a confession to make: I was never much of a fan of the *Kangaroo* arcade game. To me it always seemed like a toned down, simplistic version of *Donkey Kong*. The only thing that endeared the game to me was its graphics: the lush greenery, the yummy fruit, and most of all the lavish colors. All of these things are conspicuously absent from VCS *Kangaroo*. The branches are merely stark brown lines (it must be gypsy moth season), the ladders look more like stacks of boxes, the apple cores are tiny dots, and the pink monkeys sometimes resemble fish, or maybe pigs. Moreover, your jumping is accompanied by an irritating noise, and your punches sound for all the world like gunshots.

But even though the graphics and the sound are generally horrible, the gameplay is many times better than in the arcades. Since the apple cores are so tiny, they are harder to avoid and punch. Ditto on the monkeys. And, in any case, some of the graphics are good. Atari has dutifully reproduced the *Kangaroo* logo, as well as the kangaroos and the bell. In addition, as bad as the sound effects are, the *Kangaroo* theme which opens the game and the refrain of "Oh Susannah" when you rescue your baby make up for it.

The game, for those of you who didn't read the July issue, is about a bunch of monkeys who kidnap a baby kangaroo. As the Mama kangaroo, you must rescue your baby by running along a series of branches and ladders. Trying to stop you is a pack of monkeys who throw apple cores at you. You may jump and duck (all done with the joystick) to avoid menaces, as well as punch at apple cores or monkeys for 200 points apiece. To make sure that you don't waste too much time on

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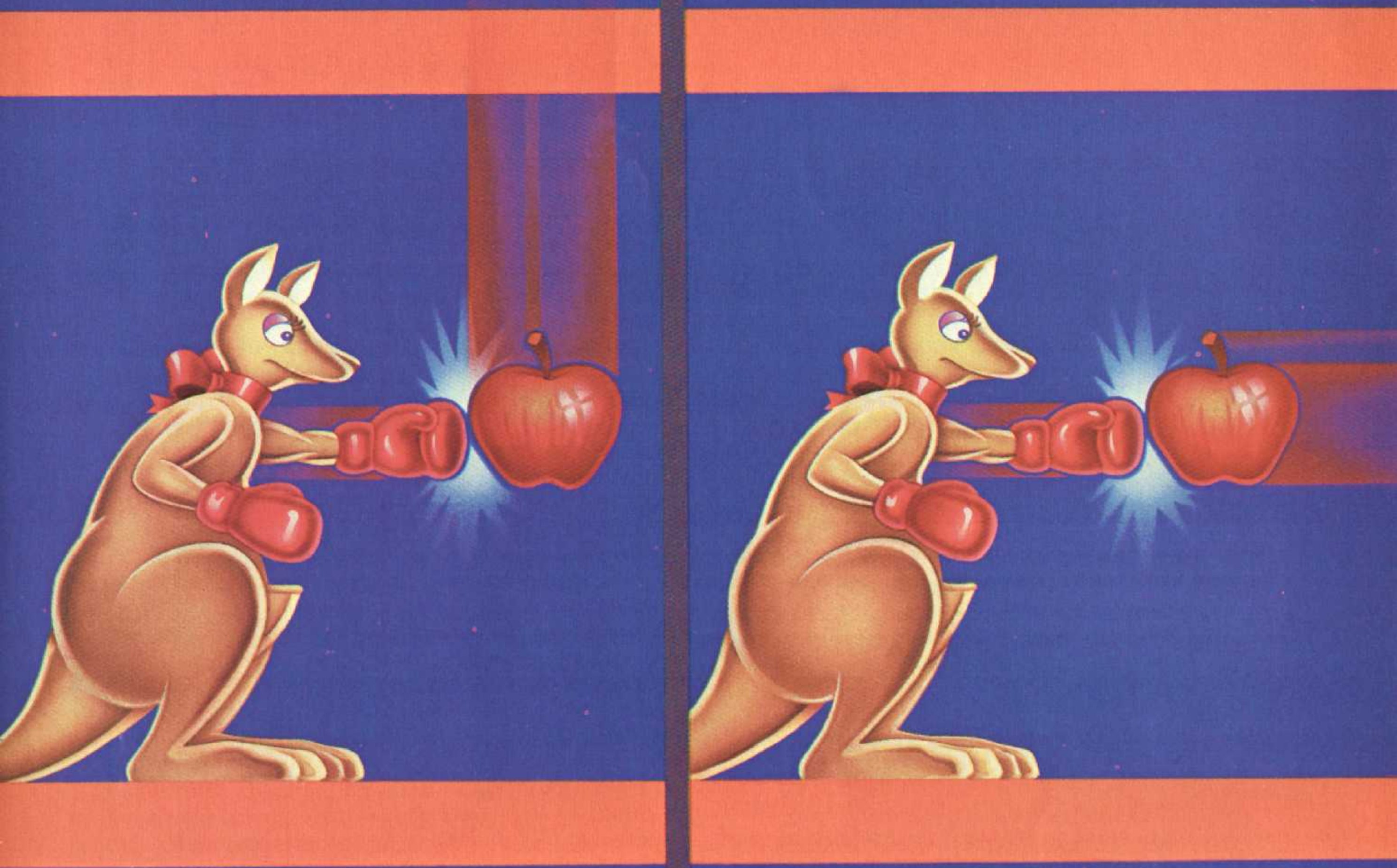

Which player is about to hit the jackpot?

Think quick. This two-fisted Kangaroo is a ringer for the one in the arcade. So don't pull your punches. Like the player on the right. He'll only score 100 points for punching a thrown apple. But the player on the left will score twice as many for punching a falling apple.

Only Atari makes Kangaroo for the ATARI® 2600™ Game, Sears Video Arcade† systems, and a version exclusively for the ATARI 5200™ SuperSystem.

So get Kangaroo. It's a knockout.

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any one screen, there is a bonus counter which counts slowly down from 2000 by 100's; if it reaches zero, you lose one kangaroo. Once you save your baby, you must repeat this feat on a different and more difficult board. It's not easy! After three boards, the order of screens repeats, but at a faster pace. This continues until you have lost all three kangaroos allotted at the beginning

The action in this game never lets up for an instant. From the beginning, the monkeys are already very fast and very devious. Before you can master this game, or even start searching for patterns, you must master the skill of jumping—if you don't, even the best punches can't keep you alive.

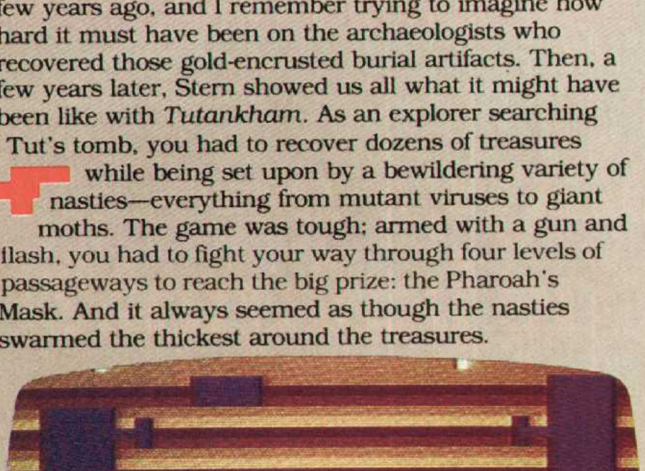
Unlike the arcade version, it's not a good idea to go back for more fruit after ringing the bell. Just pick up what's in your path.

TUTANKHAM 🕹🕹🕹

Parker Bros/Atari VCS

By Noel Steere

The riches of the Boy King's tomb visited my town a few years ago, and I remember trying to imagine how hard it must have been on the archaeologists who recovered those gold-encrusted burial artifacts. Then, a few years later, Stern showed us all what it might have been like with *Tutankham*. As an explorer searching Tut's tomb, you had to recover dozens of treasures while being set upon by a bewildering variety of nasties—everything from mutant viruses to giant moths. The game was tough; armed with a gun and flash, you had to fight your way through four levels of passageways to reach the big prize: the Pharoah's Mask. And it always seemed as though the nasties swarmed the thickest around the treasures.



Tutankham's fine graphics and blisteringly fast action gained it quite a few arcade followers, but it never seemed to get the full recognition it deserved. Now Parker Brothers has brought out a home version, and what this VCS adaptation lacks in graphic sophistication it makes up for in play action.

All things considered, the graphics in this version are pretty good—for a VCS game. It's the old problem again: not enough detail. Instead of the stone-and-mortar look of the arcade game's passageways, this tomb is composed of simple colored bands. The graphics for the monsters come off the best—varied, colorful, well animated—but the explorer is terrible. No beard, no safari suit, no pith helmet. He looks like the thief from *Lock 'n' Chase* with his feet cut off.

The action, however, is great. The game is faithful to the four-level, get-the-mask structure of the arcade version, but the monsters appear at will and in seemingly greater numbers. They're also very fast and collect in the most inconvenient places—bottlenecks, where there's only one way to go, seem to be their favorite nesting ground. Skill with the gun and flash won't be enough to get you over, either. Each level is timed, so you can't just stand there and blast away until they stop coming. And while arcade hands will probably find the first difficulty level easy to beat, there are also three more levels where the nasties will head for you like flies to sugar.

If the monsters block your path in a direction you can't shoot in, go back up until they're off the screen. When you head back down again, they'll be gone.

KEN USTON'S BLACKJACK/POKER 🕹🕹🕹½

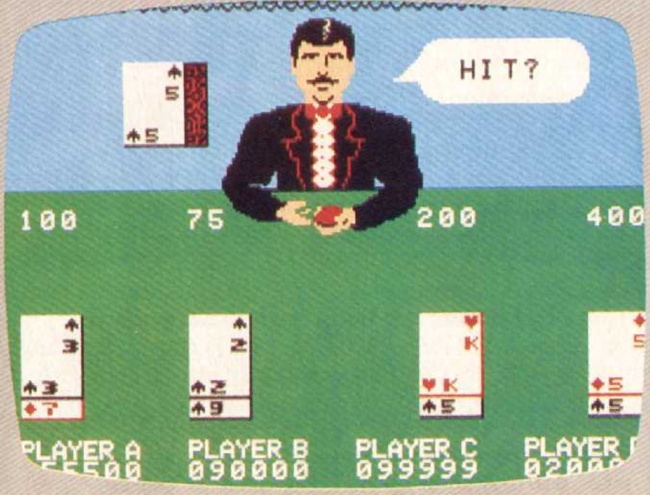
Coleco/ColecoVision

By Gary Miller

Everyone knows that gambling card games are the most overdone, overworked video game cartridges in the marketplace. The trick is to offer some new twists. Score one royal flush for Coleco, then, because *Ken Uston's Blackjack/Poker* is a dandy.

The pre-game option menu starts out with several unique features. Gone are the skill level choices—instead, you use the keypad to choose either poker or blackjack, with an option for up to four players (each couple uses one of the two controllers). Then you're asked to name your own stake—up to $99,999!

This brings us to the dealer, Max—as real a personality as any you'd meet in a Vegas or Atlantic City casino. He shuffles (the sound effect is great), he deals (his hand motions have almost three-dimensional



realism), gives you a disgruntled frown if you win, and displays a cockeyed grin and a raised eyebrow if he wins (all that's missing is a comment from him like "Got you again, sucker."). Max also makes helpful or not so helpful comments in a cartoon balloon to his right. Along with remarks such as "Hit?", "Place bet" and "You lose," he'll also remind you of the illegalities of betting over the house limit, betting more than you have, etc.

The Blackjack play itself is also realistic and unique. Along with the usual "hit," "stand," "double" and "split" options are two innovative commands, "total" and "help." "Total" tells you how many points you have in your hand (in case you're lazy). "Help" introduces you to professional player Ken Uston. Get into a spot where you're not sure whether to hit again or stand pat, one push of the "help" key will flash Ken's advice up on the screen to aid you.

Poker is not quite as challenging as Blackjack, partly because it's a five-card stud game where you can bet or fold after every card. But both games are still a lot of fun. This is a cartridge the older gambling populace will want to indulge in as much as—if not more than—younger players. Topped off by Max's incredible graphics, the superb shuffling and dealing sounds, and catchy tunes played during the course of the games, this cart is a hands-down winner.

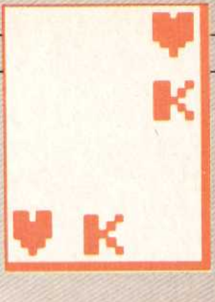
Sitting on a dynamite poker spread? Bet the house limit on each new card and win a bundle. Max will hold a deuce-four-six and challenge your three aces to the bitter end.

TUNNEL RUNNER

CBS/Atari VCS

By William Michael Brown

The very first release in what promises to be a long line of VCS cartridges with increased memory, *Tunnel Runner* is a multilevel, 3-D maze game that comes complete in one cart—no memory add-on.

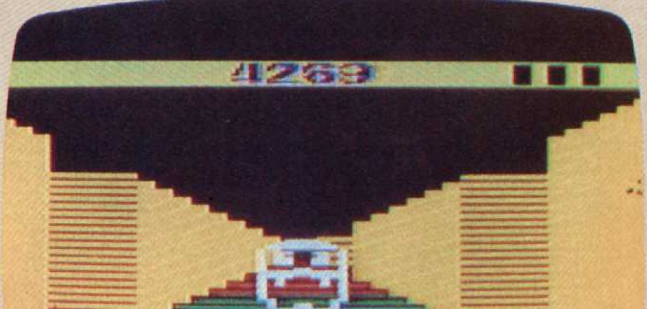


Something this new to the video game universe immediately begs the question: Is it original? No way. Maze games are as old as the hills, and the overall look of *Tunnel Runner*'s 3-D effect has at least one direct predecessor in Starpath's *Mindmaster*.

But if that sounds like *Tunnel Runner* is a candidate for the dumper, think again. What we've got here is the most successful rendition of the classic maze theme to date—a game so tightly conceived, graphically interesting and challenging that it ought to sustain the interest of the most jaded maze freak for a long time.

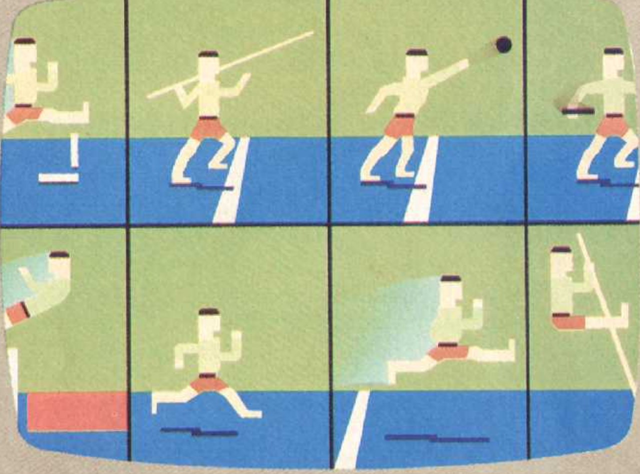
The basic design is as simple as can be. The game opens with the usual overhead map view; push the fire button once and you're inside the maze, a world of golden walls and multi-colored floors. Although you'll score points for exploring the maze itself, your main goal is to find the exit and the hidden key that unlocks it. Also inhabiting the maze are several monsters that are very adept at cornering you in blind alleys.

The actual play mechanics are also designed to be as simple as possible. Punch the fire button when you want to flip back to the map view; punch it again to return to the maze.



From there on, it gets complicated. The maze and corresponding maze map are both generated by a built-in randomizer, thus ensuring that you'll get a different maze every time you plug in the cart. The floors change color as you progress through the maze, thus signalling gains in points; a rainbow effect betrays the presence of exits. Not all the exits are the way out, however—some of them are "rest rooms" that will warp you to another area of the maze (useful when you're trying to escape a monster), while others will send you back to a lower level and force you to start all over again.

The game progresses too fast to make real maps, but marking the quadrants where the key and exit are located can save you plenty of points.



DECATHLON 🕹🕹🕹🕹

Activision/Atari VCS

By Randi "Fleetfoot" Hacker

I love sports. Really. I was a champion gymnast and now I am an adequate runner but frankly, the one thing that really bothers me connected with getting out there and sweating your brains out is what it does to your make-up. If you've wiped the sweat from your brow on the sleeve of a white T-shirt and ended up with black smears that simply don't come out in the wash, you know what I mean. And, furthermore, there's nothing more embarrassing than running without make-up and running into someone you want desperately to impress. This always happens. This is one of the reasons I am so fond of Activision's new *Decathalon* game. You can compete in all 10 Olympic events wearing your Sunday best and never smudge your mascara.

Decathlon does indeed incorporate all 10 of the Olympic events, from the 100-meter dash to the pole vault to the discus throw. And if you think that running the 100 meter event is going to be a snap sitting down, just try doing it in under 10 seconds.

The way you compete is with the joystick. You wiggle it rapidly left to right and in this way build up speed. A timer at the bottom of the screen tells you callously just how poorly you're doing. To jump you push the fire button, as you do to put any shots you might want to put or to release the javelin or discus. The hardest event of all is the pole vault in that precision timing is required. If you don't release the pole at exactly the right second, you miss.

Activision very nicely gives you three tries at most everything and, in the high jump, you get three attempts at each height. Each time you successfully clear the bar, it is raised.

The little athletic jock of a man you control moves quite realistically, lifting his lead leg in the hurdles and flipping over onto his back in the high jump. The funniest realistic detail of all is the long jump event. He moves his legs rapidly in the air while flying towards a new world record. The best part is that he never (never) falls on his taut, jock buns.

This is a wonderful sports simulation from the opening Olympic theme where your man runs with the torch, to the bleachers and lights in the stadium. In some ways it's better than actual physical activity in that you don't have to buy $75 jogging shoes, don't have to buy tickets and don't have to worry about political boycotts. My only complaint is that it is awfully tiring to jiggle the joystick constantly but I guess with diligent training, that too can be overcome.

When attempting the pole vault, plant your pole and then don't release it until the pole is precisely perpendicular to the ground. You'll clear the bar every time.

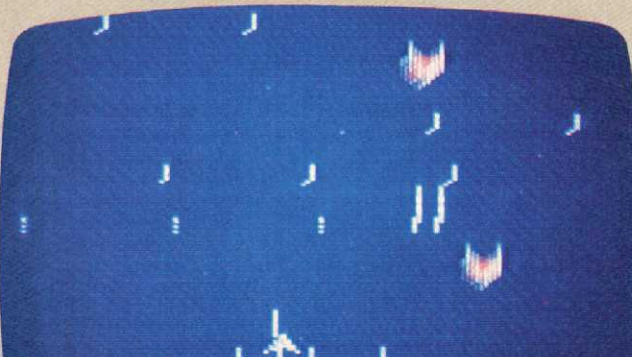
TAC SCAN 🕹🕹🕹

Sega/Atari VCS

By Mark Brownstein

Tac Scan's game concept is simple—you are in control of from one to five ships (depending on how many have been shot down) cruising through an outer-space battlezone. From above you, the enemy ships attack. Your mission is simple: shoot them down without losing all your ships. In actuality, it isn't all that simple.

You start with five ships which are arranged like the second and third row of a bowling-pin layout. Luckily, when one is shot, the others don't fall over. What's nice about this set-up of ships is that *each* ship fires a separate blast. In other words, if you haven't lost any ships, each time you fire you have a five-times greater chance of hitting something than if you are down to your last ship. This has a disadvantage, however, in that this formation makes a larger target which is



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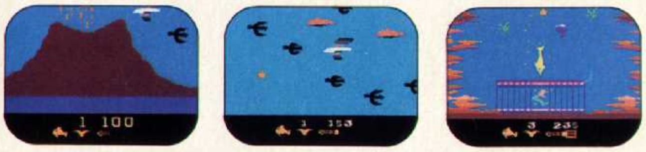

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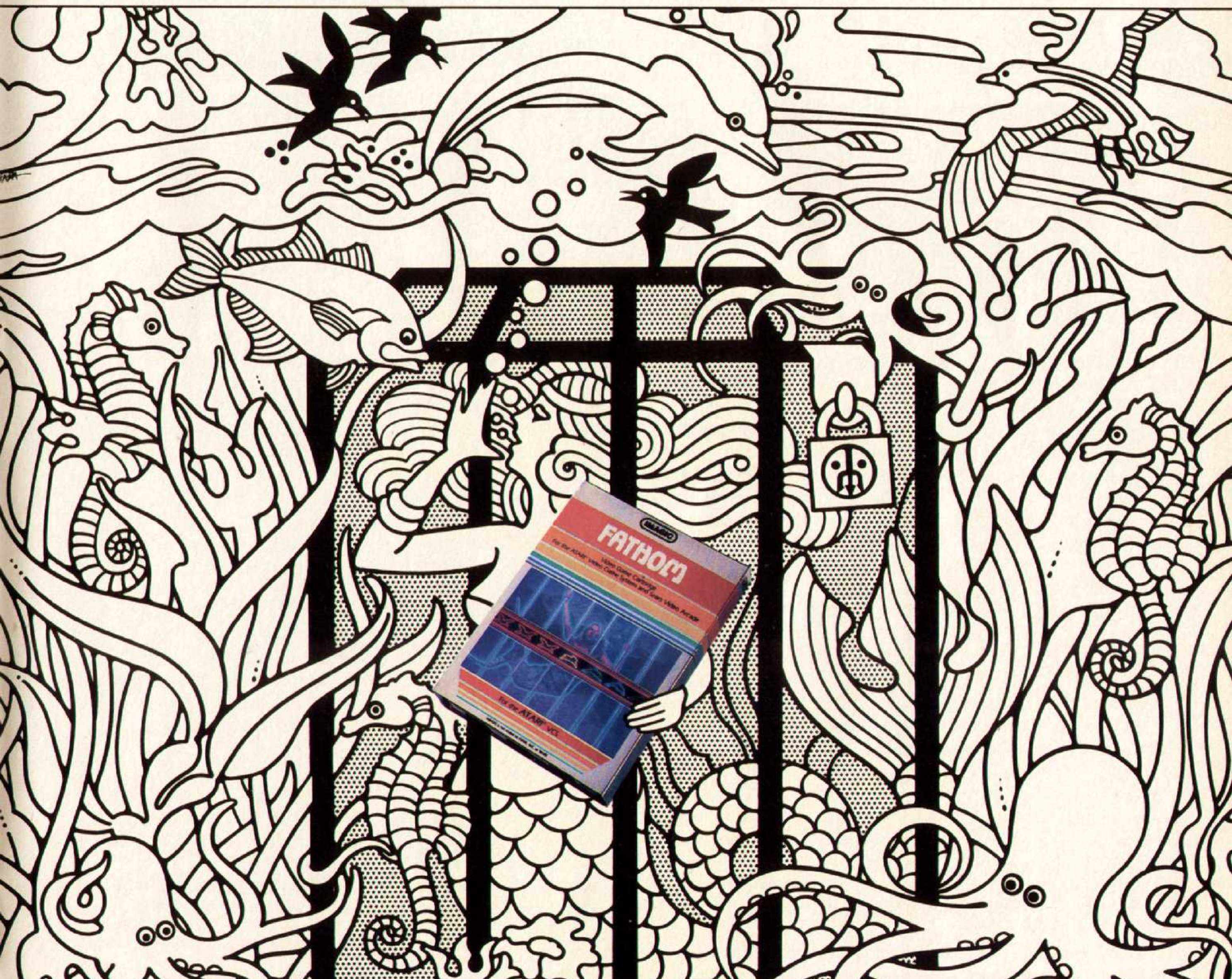


All entries must be postmarked by January 31, 1984. Drawing will be held on February 28, 1984. Winner will be notified no later than March 15, 1984. Imagic will not be responsible for lost, late, or misdirected mail. All entries which are complete and have the correct answers are eligible. Winner will be determined by a random drawing from all eligible entries. The odds of winning will depend on the number of eligible entries received. Any and all taxes are the sole responsibility of the winner. No purchase necessary. Contest void wherever restricted or prohibited by law. Employees, distributors and advertising agencies of Imagic and their families are not eligible for entry.

harder to maneuver to avoid getting hit.

Each attack wave has 10 enemy ships. You get a fixed number of points for each ship shot. If you are able to get 3 or more ships with one shot, the scores jump rapidly into the bonus area. A shimmering "mother ship" is worth 500 points.

When you complete an attack wave, you are rewarded with one new ship. If you don't need it, it is held on reserve for when you do. If you're good in the early rounds, you may not want to replace lost ships until you are down to your last one or two. In order to replace a ship, you must steer your attack layout so that the descending replacement ship fits into the formation where you want it. What this docking maneuver allows you to do is to arrange your own attack formation by controlling where your replacement ships go. If you prefer not to dock in this way, let the ship sail off into space. When this segment is completed, game play resumes.

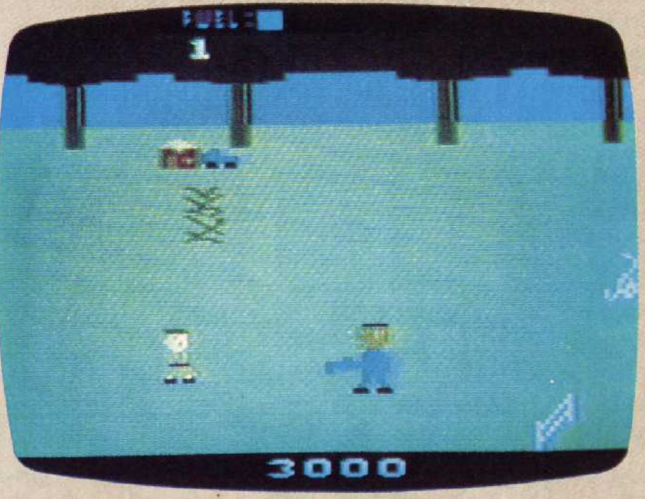
As you complete four waves, the background color changes, indicating that you have progressed to a higher level (also worth more points). It is at the higher levels where those reserve ships really become important—the enemy ships are closer together and come at you much faster.

Strategically, there are many ways to play the game. You can run and gun, going straight up, then zigging and zagging to knock out the enemy ships, which seem to like lining up in rows. Alternatively (and especially in the early rounds), steering all the way to the left or right and shooting will eventually knock out the attack wave without any casualties.

Sega has found a use for the right cartridge port, which goes unused in most one-player games: They plug in the paddle controller, which is used for *Tac Scan* (and probably for other Sega carts). Plug it in and leave it there, you may need it.

At first, *Tac Scan* didn't seem like much of a game. Play action didn't seem terribly challenging, it was hard to identify with any of the play characters, and while the graphics were clean and crisp, they weren't inspiring. But I found myself returning to this game over and over to try to figure out new ways to beat it—to discover new formations, new maneuvers, new attack levels. I won't say *Tac Scan* is a great game, but it is good. If you like space games and are looking for one which finally gives you some control over strategy, *Tac Scan* should be worth the investment.

At the beginning of most attack waves after the first, don't move your ships—most waves start with the attackers directly above you and a quick shot usually gets you a quick few hundred points. Letting attackers get by you doesn't cost you anything—wait until three or four ships are lined up and shoot them for a bonus.



THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

Wizard Video Games/Atari VCS

By Mark Trost

With a name like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, you know you're not going to play *Strawberry Shortcake Musical Match-ups*. Based on the now classic blood-and-gore feature directed by Tobe Hooper, the scenario follows the movie fairly closely. Since most of Hooper's picture was shot from the point of view of the killer, referred to in both movie and game as Leatherface (since he wears a leather mask), you are Leatherface. With your trusty chainsaw you make hamburger out of innocent—and some not-so-innocent—victims, loving every minute of it. The game opening finds you holding an idling chainsaw (activated by a push of the fire button). Instead of lives, you're given three tanks of gas. Idling uses up small amounts of fuel, engaging the saw uses up a substantial amount.

Victims appear helter skelter all over the screen, letting out an ear-piercing scream when they first see you (thus notifying you of their presence) and then running for their lives before you cut them up.

Since the victims are under computer control, many elude you even though you appear to have just impaled them with your saw. But most of the time they willingly walk into your hungry saw.

If you find this casual discussion of murder and bloodletting (not to mention the portrayal of rampaging psychopaths as video game heroes) disconcerting, this is not a game for you. (If you do like this type of thing, we don't want to meet you in a dark alley.) Our personal objections to this kind of cartridge aside, we find it doesn't even work from a video game enthusiast's standpoint.

When attempting to do in a victim, don't try to do anything fancy. A quick thrust to the mid-section will generally do the trick. If that doesn't work, get them from behind. After all you're a maniac, you don't care what's fair.

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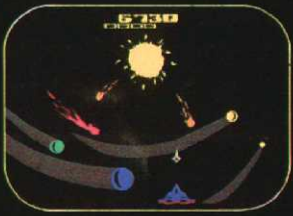

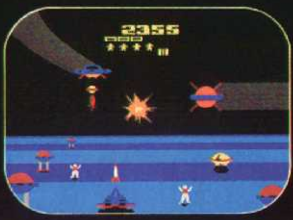

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BY IMAGIC

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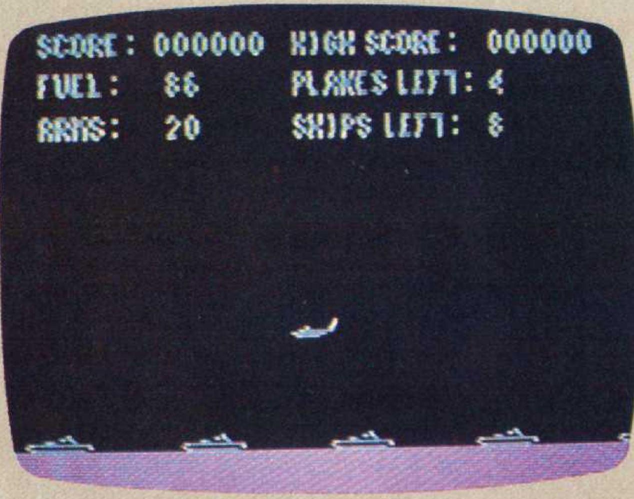


JUMP JET

Avant Garde/Apple

By Noel Steere

Here's a game that combines fast action with the need for skilled strategic planning and the results are addictive. In fact, if the game had been just a little bit more difficult, it would be one of the greatest computer games ever to come out.

The object of *Jump Jet* is to fly your plane and protect the Loyal Fleet from an opposing army without being shot down by them and without running out of fuel. The first attackers that you must repel are the torpedo boats which you must bomb before they get close enough to fire torpedos at your fleet. These ships are easy enough to destroy but keep an eye on where you're flying or you might inadvertently destroy yourself.

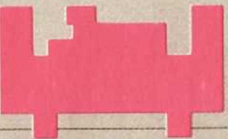
The next vessels that attack you are submarines which are a little bit smarter than the boats. If you try to bomb them from too high an altitude, the subs will simply dive out of range and resurface totally undamaged. This means you must bomb them at low altitudes which, of course, leaves you wide open for attack by the subs themselves. This is where a good background in dodging and quick turns comes in handy.

The final offensive takes place between you and the opposing army's kamikaze planes. These are the only weapons that don't shoot. They are also masters of evasion and are therefore very nearly impossible to hit with your own fire.

If you manage to defeat the kamikazes, you have to take the offensive yourself by flying to the enemy army's headquarters on an island. Once you arrive, you've got to destroy the last weapons the army has—missile launchers. This is done by bombing them. If you succeed, you must then land at the HQ.

The action is terrific and the graphics are great: from the blaze of glory in which your ship goes down when you crash to the twisted metal of a destroyed launcher. While it takes a good long while to master, once you have gotten proficient at it, you'll find it gets a little bit boring. All in all, however, the game is very good.

Wait for the subs to fire first then dive down and start bombing. Once you've dropped your bombs, pull up immediately and repeat the same strategy.



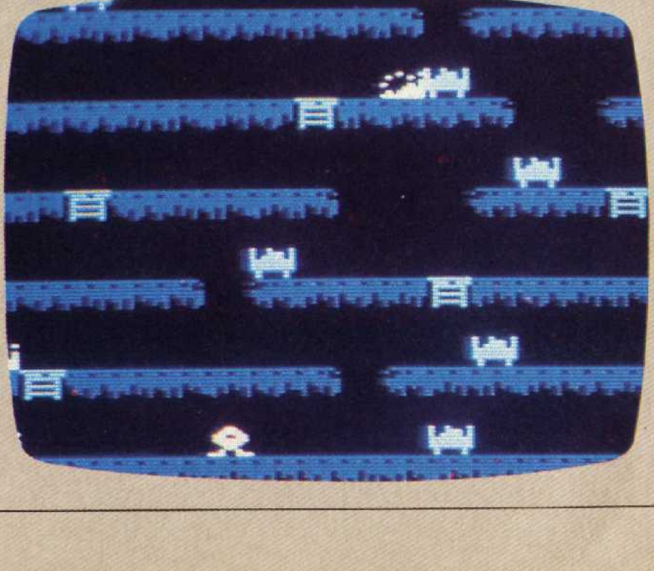
GOLD FEVER

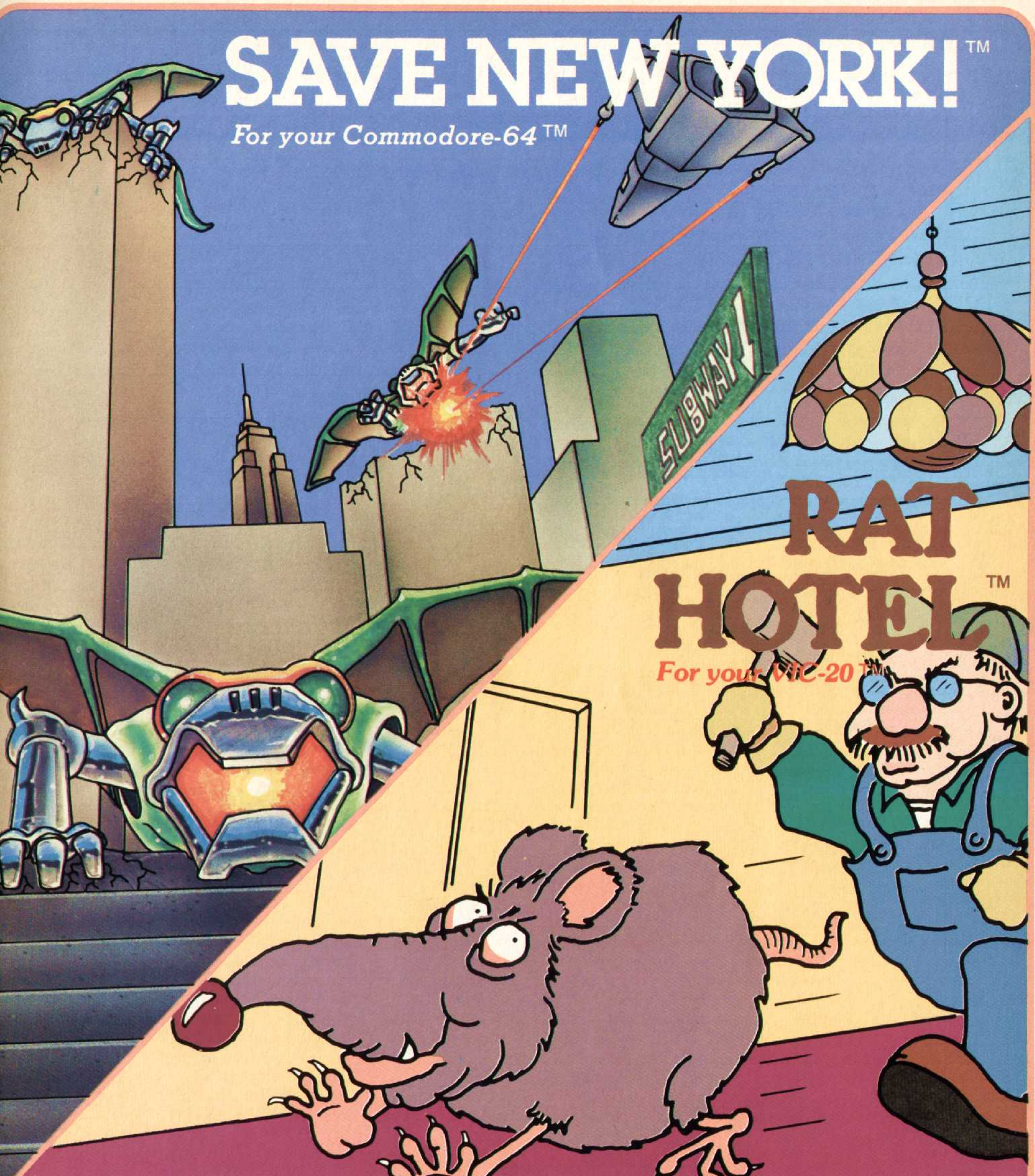
Tronix/VIC-20

by Robert Alonso

Striking it rich has always been difficult to do, but now it is even difficult to accomplish in a game. In *Gold Fever* you become a miner in search of glittering gold. To amass your fortune you must not only be daring and quick, but also clever and creative. You must avoid getting trampled by runaway boxcars or smashed by rolling boulders. You must also be careful not to fall into bottomless chasms and you must avoid the murderous claim jumper. He wants one thing more than he wants gold and that is to take away each of your three lives. There is also one more challenge you must meet: a limited supply of oxygen. You must run around the mine both with dexterity and with speed.

Gold Fever is fun, but it's style gives a feeling of *deja vu*. The screens are set up like cut-away views of five-level ant farms. Yes, you guessed it: its roots are *Donkey Kong*, *Miner 2049er* and other climbing games. *Gold Fever* features a pleasant musical tune at the beginning of each game, nine levels of play that

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quickly approach impossibility, two alternating mazes and a very handy "pause" control. The miner is well designed and has several poses that create a fantastic illusion of animation. Every time the miner is hit by a runaway car or boulder he plops to the ground and thrashes about for awhile. Perhaps the game's most interesting challenge is the instructions: You are told that you can hurdle across the chasms but are not told how. Trying to figure out how to jump across chasms will probably entice you into playing for hours.

Timing is the most important factor to clearing the chasms.

M.U.L.E. 🕹🕹🕹🕹

Electronic Arts/Atari 400/800

By Paul Backer

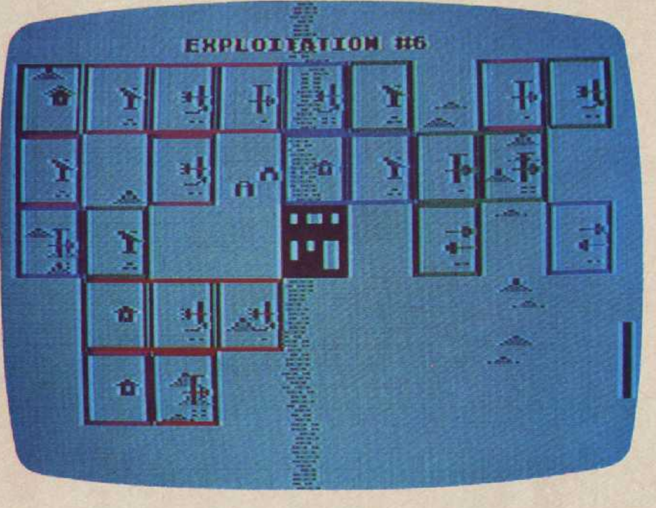
One of the most tragic things about this world today is that we've run out of distant continents to discover, claim in the name of his Sovereign Majesty King Philip Morris, and colonize. And, to date, space colonization is really out of the question. This is why we have computers. Using them you can set up camp just about anywhere in the universe. This is the main idea behind *M.U.L.E.*, an excellent new game from Electronic Arts.

The lot of a colonist can be a lonely one but, fortunately, in this game, you are not alone in your colonization endeavor. You've got your Multi Use Labor Element (or M.U.L.E.) to accompany you on your adventures.

The planet you've decided to settle has three different types of terrain: river, plain and mountain. Each terrain is especially well-suited to one type of cultivation endeavor—e.g. river areas are best for food production, while mountains are best for mining. This does not mean that you absolutely cannot mine in the plains. You can but don't expect to get as much out of it, that's all. You cannot, however, mine in river areas.

Before you start making plans about what to do with your land, you've got to get some land which is accomplished either by grabbing a free plot or buying one of the 44 plots during a land auction. During your turn you also get to outfit your M.U.L.E. at the store by buying what you'll need to cultivate your plot of land.

The graphics are spectacular—clear, colorful and sharp and sometimes very funny. The sound effects are excellent and game animation is nothing short of terrific. There is even a random element that comes from messages you occasionally see on the screen, e.g. "Your investments in artificial dumbness have brought you X dollars." Other messages are periodically broadcast and these affect everyone—e.g. acid rain which brings up food production or the arrival of a pirate ship which will rob you of all the Smithore you've mined. The game is extremely sophisticated and a must-have.



Since the computer cheats constantly, watch what it does during the auctions. This might let you in on what is going to happen next turn.

PENTAPUS 🕹🕹

Turning Point/Apple

By George Kopp

Pentapus is a difficult shoot-em-up, but unlike other difficult shoot-em-ups like *Centipede* the difficulty lies in faults of design, not gameplay. You have to battle waves of attackers, using your "stargate" as a weapon. This looks like a window frame and it moves freely about the playfield, even scrolling from right to left off the edge. At the start of each wave the attackers line up *Space Invaders*-style, but immediately disperse. They scroll top to bottom as well as left to right off the screen.

To eliminate the aliens, just get them inside your window frame and press the fire button. That part's easy. The hard part is that they shoot at you as well, and the really hard part is that their bombs—little white specks—are almost impossible to spot against the star-filled background of the screen.

The one advantage that you have, at least on the earlier levels, is that the aliens' bombs only fall toward the bottom of the screen. In later screens, though, you have to face smart bombs that chase you all over the place. These, at least, are easier to see. You also get to make your window frame smaller and a harder target to hit.

On the fourth screen you face the Pentapus itself, OMNI-DIRECTIONAL FORCED SCROLLING ACTION FROM THE CREATOR OF SHAMUS.™

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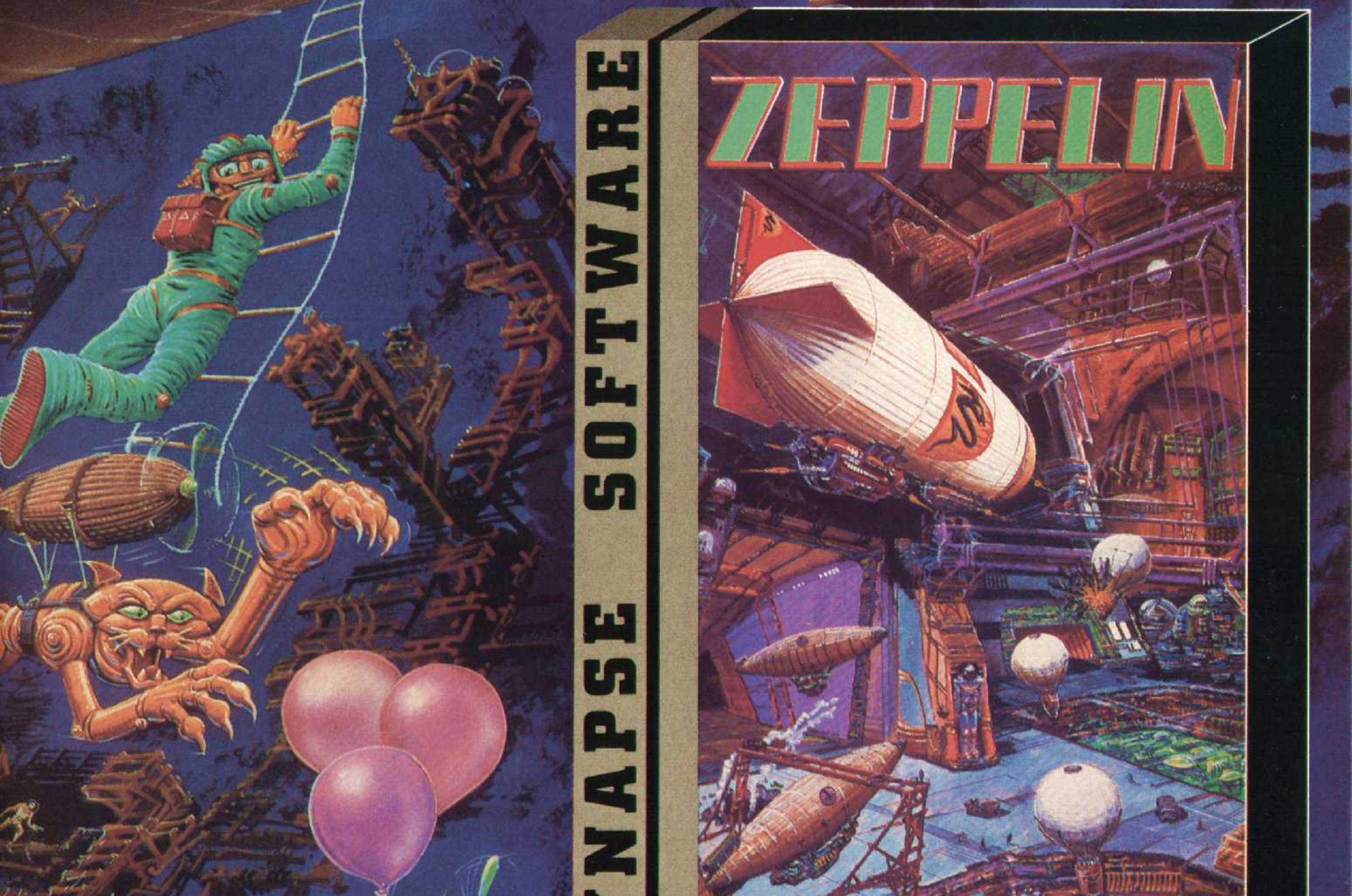

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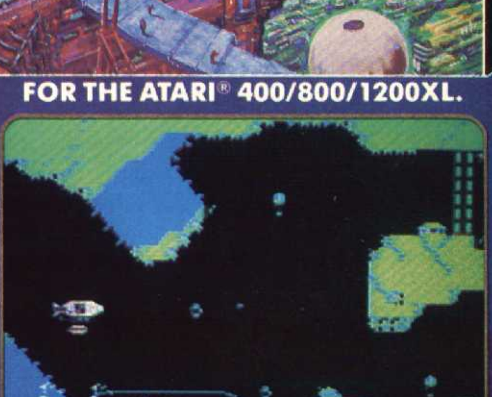

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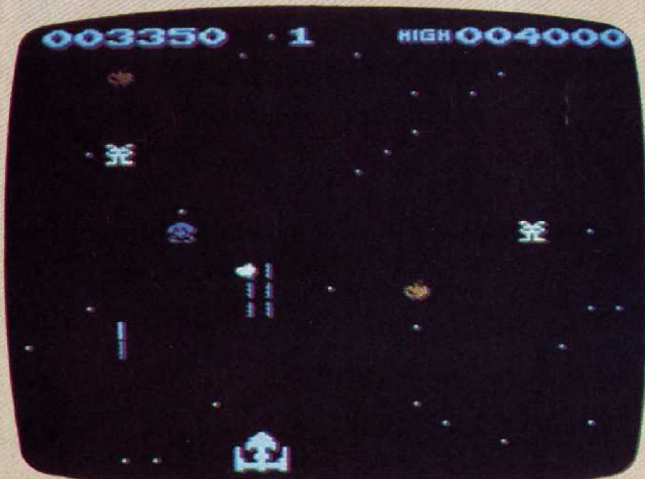
5221 Central Avenue, Richmond, CA 94804 · (415) 527-7751 which, if you hadn't guessed, is a five-armed octopus. A bunch of aliens called whirrs must be eliminated before you can tackle the Pentapus and go back to the beginning. Get the Pentapus three times and you win.

Pentapus was designed by Carl Sagan's son, Jeremy Sagan. Considering that Sagan senior is one of the most outspoken friends of extraterrestrials, it's a little disappointing that Sagan junior came up with a blast-the-aliens game. Maybe next time he'll have us search those billions and billions of stars for life forms we can do something more interesting with than blow away.

On the Pentapus screen, immediately dart off to the right and emerge from the left. This gives you a fighting chance against the first smart bomb.



GALACTIC BLITZ

Tronix/VIC-20

By Robert Alonso

Galactic Blitz might more appropriately be called *Galactic Bust*. It is a less-than-captivating attempt to imitate the arcade hit *Galaxian* which doesn't quite make it. Any avid gamer will soon tire of the simple screen display and repetitive game play. Unlike *Galaxian*, you are not pitted against a hoard of aliens that attack in deadly groups. In *Galactic Blitz* you find yourself being pestered by an inept troop of attackers that are easily outmaneuvered.

As in *Galaxian*, you are the captain of a spaceship defending something which we will presume is the Earth (although you'll never know for sure as you see only a dark screen with no detail whatsoever). You've got to shoot down all the aliens before they destroy you (original, no?). But destroying the aliens is harder than you may think not because they're skilled fighters but because they are cute—perhaps the only appealing part of the game. It will break your heart to destroy the Pearons which look like small pears or the Heartattacks which resemble hearts or the other three wacky looking character types. If you overcome your soft spot for them and destroy them all, more will glide in from some other corner of the screen. The process repeats itself over and over again until you either are destroyed five times or deliberately misplace the game cassette—whichever comes first.

Galactic Blitz doesn't even feature stimulating sound effects. Apart from a so-so introductory sequence, the sound effects are your usual whiz of laser fire accompanied by an uninteresting collection of blips and bleeps that just leave you yawning.

Scoring well in this game is no problem. All you must do is avoid getting hit while holding down the fire button for continuous fire. You should be able to rack up some very high scores within the first half-hour. If you are anything close to accomplished at *Galaxian*, your *Galactic Blitz* score will be so astoundingly high that naive passersby will gape.

Find the unique spot on the screen where all the attackers loop. Lurk there and shoot like a madman.

BURIED BUCK$

PDI/Atari 400/800

By Paul Backer

Buried Buck$ is a fine example of an unfortunate trend—placing originality before quality game play. There simply must be some reasonable middle ground between all the Pac-Guys and Protectors other than something as far-fetched as digging for bags of money by dropping bombs from a helicopter. Of course, all would have been forgiven if it had been a good game, but it isn't.

You are the pilot of a helicopter, whose job is to mine for $. You do this (stage left) in your funny little orange helicopter, and looking for big gold $ signs. You then dig for them by making a hole in the ground with your trusty bombs and then flying down to retrieve them by touching them. Your life is complicated by a big fat plane which drops clods of dirt which will bury you if you are unlucky enough to be caught under one of them. They will also fill any hole located under them. Your only other obstacles are rocks which obstruct your digging. To get past them, you use the gun mounted in the front of the helicopter. As the levels get higher the dirt gets faster, and the rocks become more numerous.

This is a cute premise with no promise. My main complaint is that this game is boring. It goes too quickly from ridiculously easy to impossible, and along

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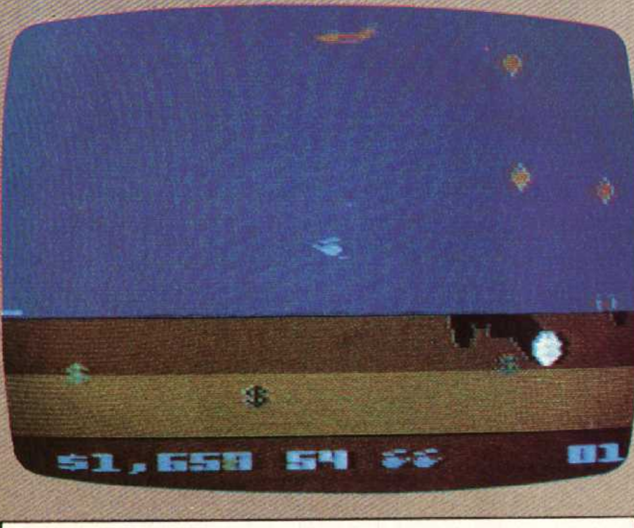
the way it completely fails to capture your attention or provide excitement for any prolonged gameplay. The sound effects leave something to be desired, too. The graphics are good, but graphics can only enhance a game, not make it into a good one.



Don't overestimate the dirt. On the easier level there is enough time to go into a tunnel and come back up before the dirt gets you.

ALPHA SHIELD

Sirius/Atari 800/1200

By Jeremy Goldstein

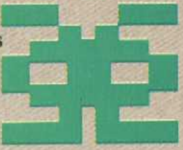
When I first bought my Atari 800 computer, I looked forward to playing all those great games I could never play on my Atari 2600. Unfortunately, it seems that those games for the 2600 have come back to haunt me. While *Alpha Shield* is decent, it would fare much better on the 2600 where such games are really needed.

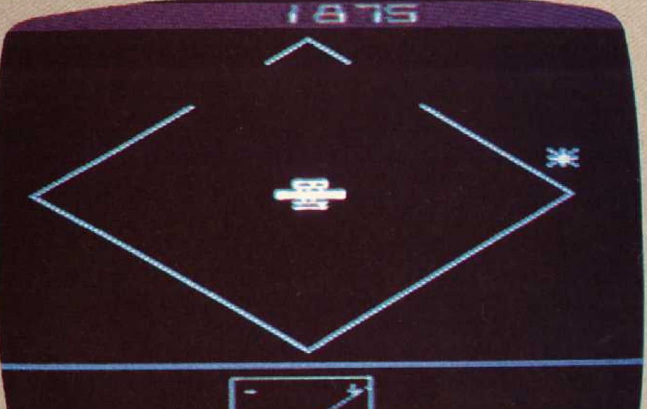
The object of *Alpha Shield* is to destroy Alpherian Military Bases, which are all surrounded by Alpha Shields. These shields constantly rotate around each base while slowly expanding and contracting. To destroy each base you must hit it enough times to drain its energy supply. You can do this by firing your endless supply of missiles through the gaps in the shield, or by maneuvering your ship inside the shield to destroy the base from close range. The closer you are to the base, the less time it takes to destroy it. You start out with five ships which are shaped like large asterisks (not a shape one expects to find on a computer like the 800). All movement is done with the joystick, but when you start firing missiles your ship stops moving. The base also has some tricks up its sleeves. In addition to the shield, it sends out its own ships to destroy you. While some wander aimlessly around the screen, others have tracking systems which allow them to home in on your ship. You can be killed either by these enemy ships or by running into the shield or the base.

The game starts out rather slowly. The shield expands and contracts very slowly and the enemy ships are sent out in random directions and provide no real threat. As the game progresses, the shield moves faster and the enemy ships get more sophisticated. Soon another shield begins to form around the base. While this shield doesn't move, it takes up a lot of space making it more difficult to get inside to destroy the base.

My major complaint is not the gameplay, which is okay, but the way it's executed. The graphics really aren't very good: the ships could be more than just asterisks, Xs and squiggly lines. Whenever you hit the base the screen flashes; hit it many times and your eyes start getting sore and blurry. The main sound effects are also intolerable. The dull, raspy background noise, combined with a high-pitched screeching whenever the base blows up, forced me to turn down the sound on my TV when playing.

A main advantage of computers is that they offer much better games than machines built only to play games. Unfortunately, *Alpha Shield* does nothing to support this idea. The way it is now, *Alpha Shield* would do well on the Atari 2600 but I just don't think it will make it with the Atari computers.





As the game progresses and the shield begins to move faster, try to get inside the shield and destroy the base as soon as possible before the second shield begins to form.

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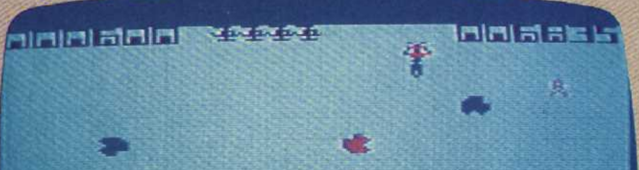
DEADLY SKIES 🕹🕹🕹

Tronix/VIC-20

By Robert Alonso

By now you've played games in which you must avoid asteroids, others in which you must avoid getting bombed by UFO's, some in which you must destroy military bases, and yet others in which you're a helicopter pilot. Now you can be besieged by all of these challenges in one game—*Deadly Skies*. The name tells no lies. You're attacked by asteroids, smart bombs that search you out and guided UFO bombs that catch you by surprise.



The graphics take the VIC to its limits. The upper portion of the sky, for example, is a light blue and the lower portion a slightly darker shade that extends into the border (quite unusual for the VIC). The missile emplacements, tanks and military bases are very well defined and colored.

As if the variety of objects you must avoid hitting (or getting hit by) were not enough to keep your joystick warm and your hands sweaty, you must also shoot your way through two layers of clouds that protect the enemy. Tronix has included 32 levels of difficulty. The first 16 are all the same speed, but feature increasing numbers of smart bombs and clouds. The second 16 levels feature the same kind of increasing difficulty but twice the speed of the first 16 levels.

Like other Tronix games, this one allows you to freeze the game in case you must leave it temporarily. Another thoughtful feature is that you can select the level at which you would like to begin. Without this feature few would ever find out what the upper 28 levels are like.

Nonetheless, *Deadly Skies* can become deadly dull after a while. The game play is repetitive, and most gamers will quickly search for a fix of excitement somewhere else.

There is one game quirk you should know about. For some inexplicable reason, the more clouds and enemy targets you blow up, the slower the game gets during that level. Reach another level and it picks up again.

Fly your copter to the bottom right corner of the screen and shoot like crazy. This gives you time to react to the UFO which flies in from the upper left hand corner.

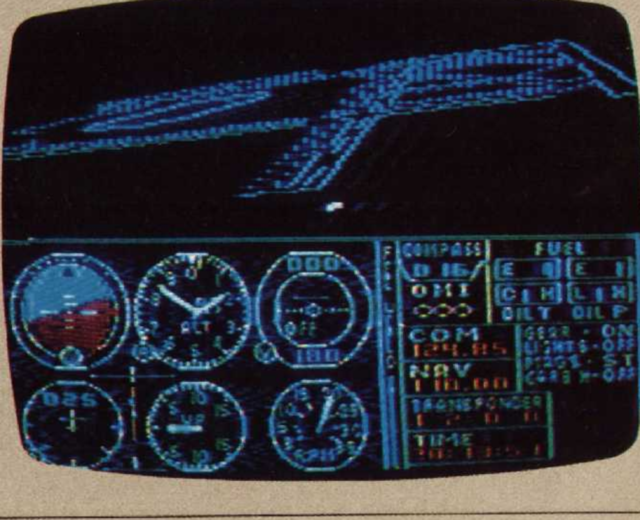
FLIGHT SIMULATOR 🕹🕹🕹🕹

Microsoft/IBM PC

By Hartley G. Lesser

The joy of flying—from exhilarating take-off, to cloud-bordered worldscapes—and the final nervous delight of landing, used to be an experience only a few could afford. But now, thanks to the fine folks at Microsoft who have written and produced a truly inspiring flight simulator, you only need an IBM PC to fly a single-engined Cessna 182. That's right—the computer long relegated to spreadsheets, word processors and accounting packages has finally sprouted wings, and it takes to flying admirably.

This software places you in the cockpit, with a full array of controls to manage the flying operations. The PC's function keys control the plane's throttle and flaps, while the numeric keypad is responsible for the elevators and trim. Ground turns when taxiing are performed by using the "INS" and "+" keys. Being inexperienced in actual flying conditions, I followed the documentation closely, and within minutes was taxiing about Chicago's Meig's field without undue hazard to



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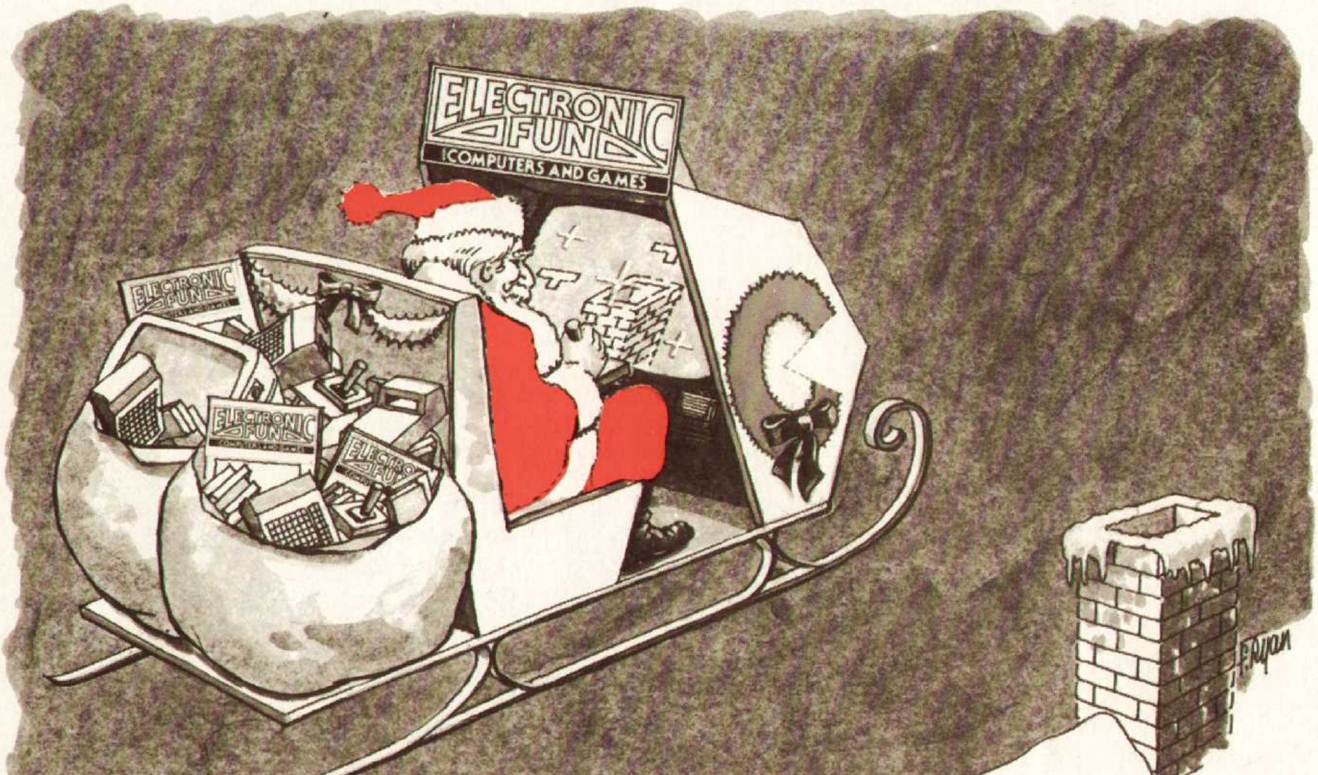

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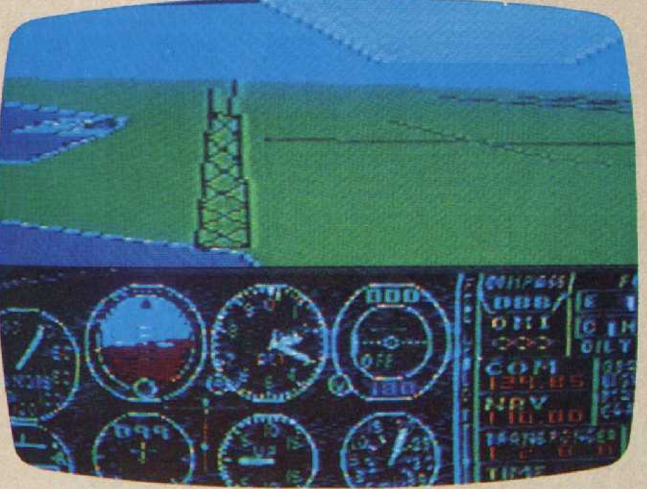


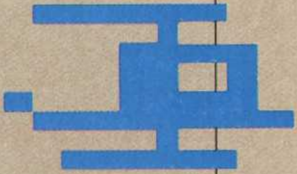
self or plane.

The 3-D display left a little to be desired in that owners of RGB graphics or monochrome boards do not get a color view of the landscape, nor of the instrument panel. The gray shadings do aid with distance perception, but color TV is recommended for total enjoyment. The instrument panel for your Cessna displays 28 functioning indicators: airspeed, altitude, altimeter, turn coordinator with slip/skid indicator, heading, vertical speed, magnetic compass, Omni-Bearing with glidescape, clock, gear up or down, lights on or off, magnetos, carburetor heat, marker lights, left and right wing fuel tank gauges, oil temperature and pressure gauges, tachometer, NAV and COM radio, transponder and control position indicators. All of these indicators or gauges are constantly updated by the program to reflect your current flying conditions and status.

Included is an Editor, which allows you to change the parameters of the flight simulator. Getting tired of Meig's field? Reset your aircraft's position for the New York and Boston area, or Seattle, or Los Angeles. Rather fly in spring or winter? The season may also be changed to suit your needs. There are two different cloud layers you can summon to test your piloting skills, as well as the time of day you wish to fly. You'd like to fly from Chicago to Seattle? This can be done as well. And all the time you get a marvelous view of the world both below and above your airplane. You can also zoom in and out using your radar which will give you an even better perspective on your location. This is a marvelous aid and once prevented me from rudely meeting Lake Michigan.

As you are using a keyboard instead of a real joystick and throttle, the actual "feel" of flying is not obtained. The keyboard, however, soon feels quite normal under your fingertips as you practice maneuvers over and over again. Microsoft's Flight Simulator actually turns your IBM PC into a Cessna. The thrill of flying becomes a reality.

Flying high requires more than single taps on the plane's elevators, but too many fingerflexes can sound downright horrible.



ZAP!

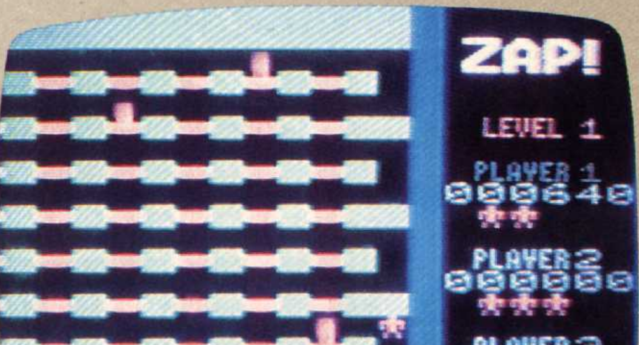
Microware/VIC-20

By Robert Alonso

Zap! is a fast-paced game that challenges you to climb the corporate ladder of success in a unique way. You reach the top by deftly crossing and climbing a grid littered by falling paperwork. Along the way you collect brownie points, represented on the screen as crosses, by backtracking to where they appear. The game can be played by four players, each having five lives to reach the top.

Those of you who've seen Penguin's *Spy's Demise* for Atari computers will get the idea. The pieces of paper fall through the grid vertically at different speeds and your little man must cross the maze horizontally while avoiding them. Obviously someone thought that this might get too simple (which it doesn't) so a timer is also thrown in to make your progress even more hazardous. You must not waste too much time running back and forth on any one level or else it will be the end of you!

This game will keep you glued to your TV for as long as it takes you to reach the top of the ladder-maze once, which will be quite a long time. Unfortunately though, once you have accomplished this, you will notice that the game just repeats itself.



The screen display is not as stimulating as the game action. There is very little use of color and the only interesting shape on the screen is that of the little man. The sound effects are not that much better than the screen graphics.

Go across the screen slowly, taking only calculated moves. Timing is critical!

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By Jules H. Gilder

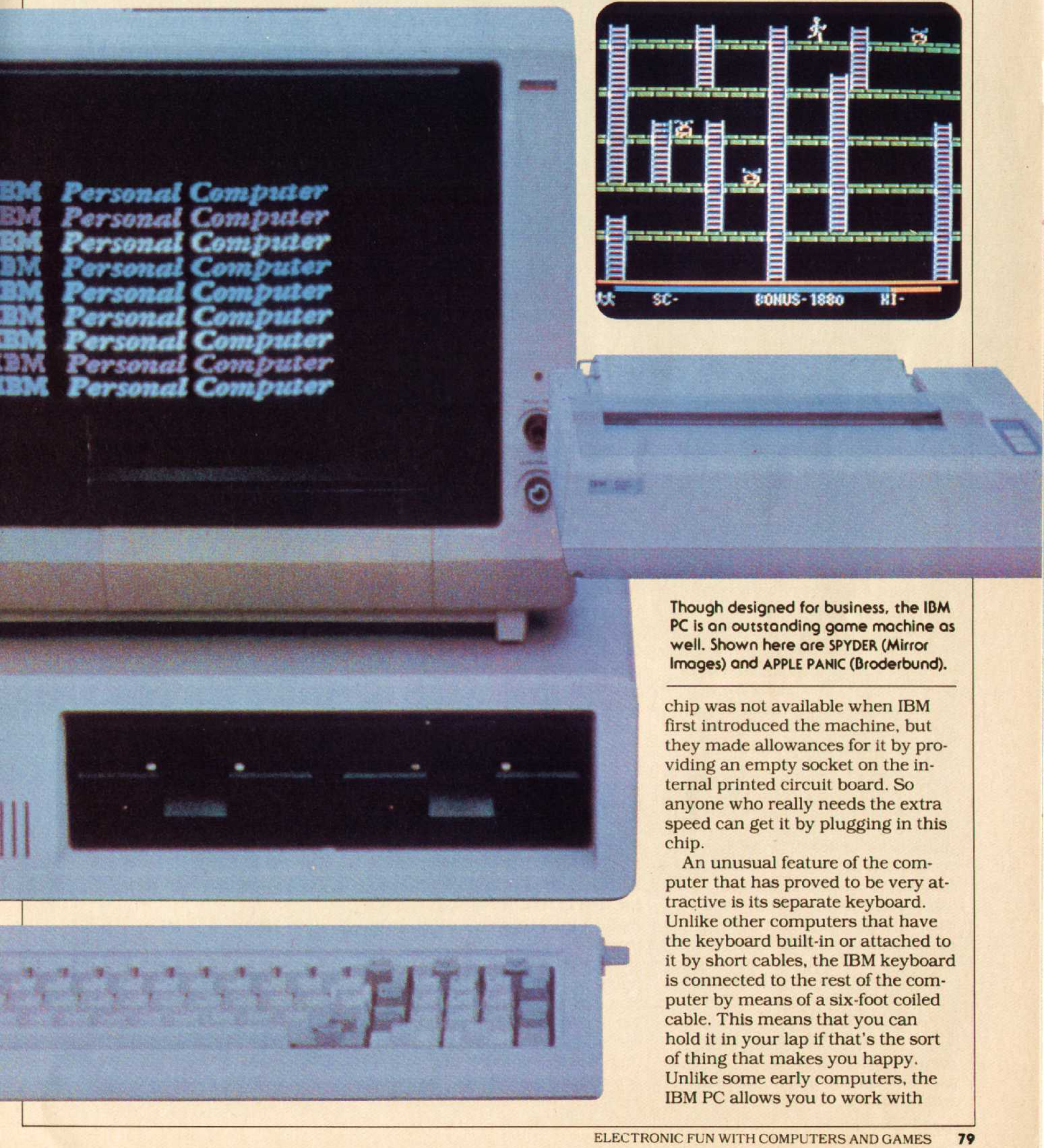
On August 12, 1981, an announcement was made that would trigger a revolution in the personal computer marketplace. On that day, IBM, well known for its huge computers in big blue cabinets and hospital clean rooms, introduced its personal computer. Known simply as the IBM Personal Computer (or IBM PC), it has rapidly become the number one contender for high-end personal computer systems. The original version of the IBM PC was priced at $1,565 to compete with the Apple II. This unit had only 16K of RAM compared to Apple's comparably priced 48K machine. Today, this 16K machine is virtually non-existent. The new starter configuration is a 64K computer with a color graphics adapter and a single, 160K disk drive. The price for this system, taking into account recent price reductions, is about $2,150.

The basic IBM computer comes with a huge amount of system software stored in ROM—40K of it. This includes Microsoft's latest version of BASIC as well as built-in diagnostic software that automatically tests the computer each time it is turned on. It is partly due to this automatic testing that there is a delay of about half a minute after the computer is turned on during which time nothing seems to be happening.

The microprocessor used in the IBM PC is one of the most powerful ones available. It is an 8088 microprocessor and is a special version of the 16-bit 8086 processor. The difference between the 8088 and 8086 is that the former works internally as an 8086 using the full 16 bits but externally it hooks up to an 8-bit data bus. Because it uses a 16-bit microprocessor, the IBM computer can access as much as 560K of RAM, enough memory to hold 20 to 30 games in memory all at once. In actuality, few people put that much memory in the machine, primarily because of cost. But as costs drop, it's nice to know that the machine can be expanded substantially.

The IBM PC is a fast machine too, with a clock speed of 4.77 MHz. By contrast, the Apple II has a clock speed of only 1 MHz. If that's not fast enough for you, there are ways you can increase processing speed even more. When the Intel company originally developed the microprocessor used in the IBM PC, they also developed a special arithmetic processing chip to work with it. This chip is called the 8087 and can significantly speed up programs that do a lot of mathematical calculations. The chip was not available when IBM first introduced the machine, but they made allowances for it by providing an empty socket on the internal printed circuit board. So anyone who really needs the extra speed can get it by plugging in this chip.

An unusual feature of the computer that has proved to be very attractive is its separate keyboard. Unlike other computers that have the keyboard built-in or attached to it by short cables, the IBM keyboard is connected to the rest of the computer by means of a six-foot coiled cable. This means that you can hold it in your lap if that's the sort of thing that makes you happy. Unlike some early computers, the IBM PC allows you to work with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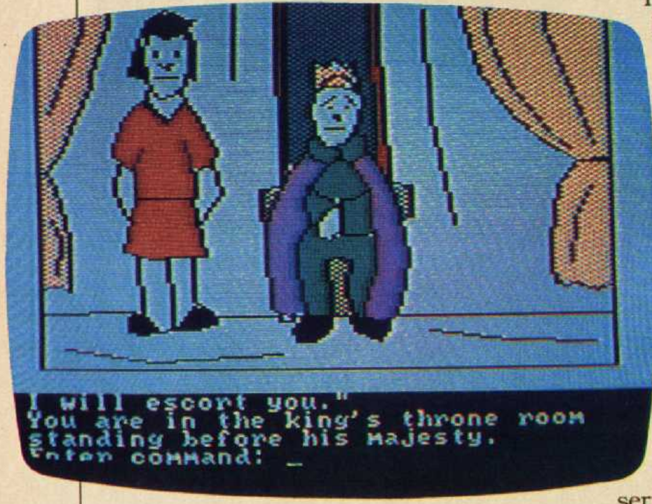
Though designed for business, the IBM PC is an outstanding game machine as well. Shown here are SPYDER (Mirror Images) and APPLE PANIC (Broderbund).

both upper- and lower-case characters. The keyboard has 83 keys and all of them have an automatic repeat capability that is activated by holding the key down for more than a second. In addition to the normal typewriter-like configuration, there are 20 more keys programmed to perform special functions—10 keys that are used as a numerical keypad and for cursor control and another 10 keys that are used as programmable function keys. These keys turn out to be very helpful because they can be used to implement special functions such as HELP screens. Or if they're properly programmed, they can be set to stop a game in the middle of play while you go answer the door, save a game in progress or do just about anything else you'd like except, of course, windows.



```
I will escort you."
You are in the king's throne room
standing before his majesty.
Enter command: _
```

Gobble Those Games

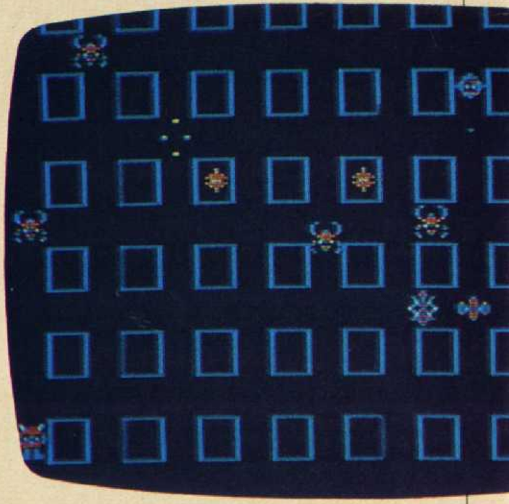
While the first applications for the IBM PC were strictly business, computer game developers quickly recognized the superior technical features of the computer and started developing games for it. Initially the games available were simply conversions of existing games on the Apple computer, and because of the scarcity of software for the IBM PC, they were gobbled up as quickly as they came out. Today, however, there is an extraordinary amount of game software available for the IBM PC ranging from excellent imitations of *Pac-Man* to the amazingly realistic *Flight Simulator* from Microsoft.

In spite of the large number of game programs now out for the IBM, the Apple computer still has greater variety of game software available. This naturally made some IBM computer owners jealous. But they don't have to be anymore, because in May, a company known as the Quadram Corp. introduced an accessory board for the IBM computer that is functionally equivalent to a 64K Apple II computer. Once this board, called Quadlink, is plugged into the IBM computer, you can run virtually any Apple program by pressing one key and inserting the Apple disk into the IBM disk drive. Once activated, the board transfers all of the input and output devices (video screen, keyboard, disk drive, etc.) from the IBM circuitry to the Apple-like circuitry of the Quadlink. This transfer however does not affect any programs that are running in the IBM PC. Thus it is possible to let the computer run two programs at once—one in the IBM PC mode and one in the Apple mode. So now you can play your favorite Apple game and if someone should come in to see if you're doing something more serious, you can switch quickly to that educational program running in the IBM mode. Presenting a hard-working facade is expensive, however. The board costs $680.

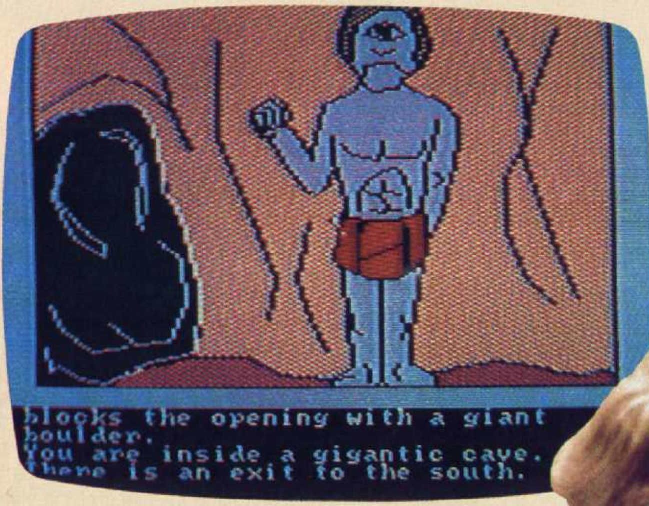
Today, much of the development of new computer games is done initially on the IBM and then converted to other machines because the IBM PC has some features that make it attractive as a super game machine.

To begin with, the IBM PC probably has the most advanced version of Microsoft BASIC developed yet. It contains about 160 BASIC statements, functions and commands which make it easy to write sophisticated programs. For example, if you want to draw a circle, you simply issue the CIRCLE (X,Y),R command, filling in the X and Y coordinates of the center of the circle and the length of the circle's radius. To do this same thing in other versions of BASIC without the CIRCLE command requires knowledge of trigonometry and knowing how to set up the appropriate formulas to calculate where each point will be plotted. Then you have to experiment and find out how many points to plot and how far away from each other they should be. This could easily require 10 or more lines of BASIC program code.

Other features of the IBM PC that make it a good choice for game programs include its color and sound capabilities. The computer can produce up to 16 different colors and can display different colors in the foreground, background and border areas. In addition, text can also be displayed in different colors. The computer has two graphics display modes—medium and high resolution. In the medium resolution mode there are 320 pixels (picture elements or dots) horizontally and 200 vertically. In the high resolution mode, this is doubled to 640 x 200. Text and graphics can be mixed on the same screen.



Among the many companies manufacturing games for the IBM PC is Sierra On-Line. Shown here are two screens from the game ULYSSES (top) and one of the scenes from CROSSFIRE.



```
blocks the opening with a giant
boulder.
You are inside a gigantic cave.
There is an exit to the south.
```

The IBM computer has a small speaker built into it so the computer can generate music and sound effects without any additional hardware. The sound capability of the computer is actually quite sophisticated. To begin with, using the SOUND command you can enter the frequency of the sound you wish to generate, along with the duration, or period of time, you want it to last. More than just generating sounds, IBM's BASIC has a PLAY command that let's the user play whole musical segments by stringing notes together. In addition to this, the computer lets the user determine whether the music is to be played in foreground or background mode. If played in background mode, the computer allows the BASIC program to continue operation while music is playing. The PLAY statement gives the user control over the length of notes, tempo, octave and even permits notes to be played in a staccato manner.

This computer is an excellent choice for both game playing and other applications, but before you run out and buy it, let me give you the bad news. It's expensive. A basic 64K machine as mentioned earlier will cost you about $2,150. But that's not all. If you want to add on extra memory or other printer options or a modem, take out a loan. In general, the price for accessory boards ranges from $200 to $900 with $350 about the average price. Still, you get what you pay for and, with the IBM PC, you get a lot.☐

THE COMPLETE

. . . for all Radio Shack computer users —

AARDVARK has approximately 20 games for the Color Computer in the Arcade and Adventure categories. Among the Adventure titles are *Quest*, *Escape From Mars* and *Pyramid*. In the Arcade area there's *Seawolf*, *Planet Raiders* and *Caterpillar*. Company's Pick: *Dungeons of Death*. "Serious" *Dungeons & Dragons* clone allows one to six players to go on a dragon hunting, monster killing, dungeon exploring search. Format unknown. **$14.95–$19.95.** *Address: 2352 S. Commerce, Walled Lake, MI 48088.*

ADVENTURE INTERNATIONAL has 15 games for the Color Computer in the Arcade category. Fast action titles include *Stratos*, *Elimination*, *Triad*, *Star Fighter* and *Armor Patrol*. Company's Pick: *Bugoff*. *Centipede*-style kill-the-bugs game gives you the chance to zap the creepy crawlers. Cassette only. **$24.95.** *Address: PO Box 3435, Longwood, FL 32750.*

ARTWORX has two games for the Model I/III in the Strategy category. *Bridge 3.0* is one of the brain teasers, but the Company's Pick is *The Nominoes Jigsaw Puzzle*. Intricate video jigsaw game utilizes "Nominoes" concepts. **$17.95–$21.95.** *Address: 150 N. Main St., Fairport, NY 14450.*

ATARI will introduce a series of Arcade games for the Color Computer in the near future. Among those titles expected to be released are *Pac-Man* and *Donkey Kong*. Price and format have yet to be determined. *Address: 1265 Borregas Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.*

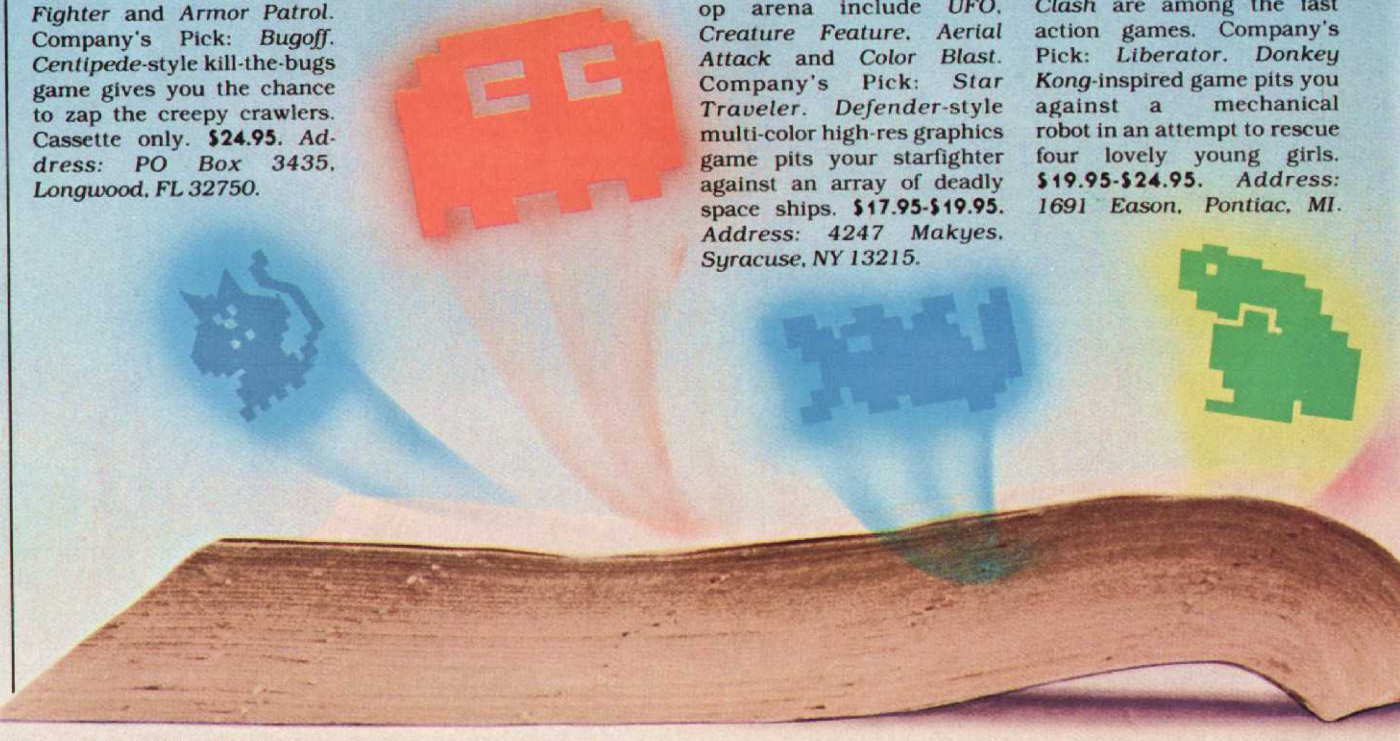
BASICS AND BEYOND has three game cassettes in the *Microcasm* series offering from 20 to 30 games for the Model I/III. Company's Pick: *Microcasm I*. Package contains 30 games including *Match 'Em*, *Wipe Out*, *Driver*, *Fake 'Em Out* and *South Pole*. Cassette only. **$24.95.** *Address: Pinesbridge Rd. Box 10, Amawalk, NY 10501.*

BIG 5 SOFTWARE has nine games for the Model I/III in the Arcade category. The fast-action titles include *Super Nova*, *Galaxy Invasion*, *Attack Force*, *Robot Attack* and *Defense Command*. Company's Pick: *Weerd*. As the sole planet defender you must thwart the invasion of encroaching space aliens. **$14.95–$19.95.** *Address: PO Box 9078-185, Van Nuys, CA.*

CHALLENGE SOFTWARE has six games in the Arcade category for the Color Computer. Titles in the coin-op arena include *UFO*, *Creature Feature*, *Aerial Attack* and *Color Blast*. Company's Pick: *Star Traveler*. *Defender*-style multi-color high-res graphics game pits your starfighter against an array of deadly space ships. **$17.95-$19.95.** *Address: 4247 Makyes, Syracuse, NY 13215.*

COLORQUEST has eight games for the Color Computer in the Arcade and Adventure categories. The Adventure titles include *Adventure Trilogy* and *Fembots' Revenge*. Some arcade games are *Ms. Nibbler*, *The Nibbler* and *Komet-Kaze*. Company's Pick: *Interceptor*. The company claims this one goes "beyond *Defender* and *Stargate*" to offer the most realistic arcade simulation possible. Warp speed action, multi-colored terrain and long-range viewer all included. **$19.95-$24.95.** *Address: Div. Softlaw Corp., 9072 Lyndale Ave., So. Minneapolis, MN 55420.*

COMPUTER SHACK has approximately 10 games for the Model I/III in the Arcade category. *Cyborg*, *Dig Out*, *Simon and Merfunkle* and *Clash* are among the fast action games. Company's Pick: *Liberator*. *Donkey Kong*-inspired game pits you against a mechanical robot in an attempt to rescue four lovely young girls. **$19.95-$24.95.** *Address: 1691 Eason, Pontiac, MI.*



GAMER'S GUIDE

the biggest Who's Who of computer games

CORNSOFT has four games for the TRS-80 line in the Arcade category. Fast action titles include *Avenger*, *Bounceoids* and *Micro Chord*. Company's Pick: *Frogger*. The arcade classic comes to the TRS/80 screen in this high-res version. **$19.95-$22.95.** *Address: 6008 N. Keystone Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46220.*

DATASOFT will have nine titles in the Arcade category for the Color Computer. Among the forthcoming Arcade games are *Moon Shuttle*, *Pooyan*, *Bruce Lee* and *Heathcliff*. Company's Pick: *Zaxxon*. The Sega classic is offered in the TRS-80 format. Players battle waves of fighters and other hazards before encountering the titular villain. **$39.95.** *Address: 9424 Winnetka Ave., Chatsworth, CA 91311.*

DISPLAYED VIDEO has four games in the Arcade category for the Model I/III. The coin-op-inspired titles include *Killer Gorilla*, *Jungle Boy* and *Penguin*. Company's Pick: *Hamburger Sam*. Virtually nothing is left out of this *BurgerTime* clone as crazed hot dogs, pickles and fried eggs all try to stop you from building your burger. **$15.95-$19.95.** *Address: 111 Marshall St., Litchfield, MI 49252.*

DYNACOMP has approximately 17 games for the Model I/III in the Arcade and Strategy areas. Thinking titles include *Bridge Master*, *Valdez*, *Space Lanes* and *Flight Simulator*. The Arcade games include *Lunar Voyager* and *Hodge Podge II*. Company's Pick: *Speculation*. Stock market simulation groups 33 companies within 11 major industries. Each player starts with $15,000 and must build it into a fortune by investing wisely. **$19.95-$23.95.** *Address: 1427 Monroe Ave., Rochester, NY 14618.*

EARLY GAMES offers a nine game package designed to educate youngsters. The program is compatible with the entire TRS-80 line. Among the games featured are *Picture Menu*, *Matching Numbers*, *Learn the Alphabet* and *Compare Shapes*. **$29.95.** *Address: Suite 140E Shelard Plaza North, Minneapolis, MN 55426.*

EPYX has 18 games for the Color Computer in the Arcade and Adventure categories. Coin-op-style programs include *Star Warrior*, *Ricochet* and *Invasion Orion*. In the Strategy area there's *Temple of Apshai* and *Upper Reaches of Apshai*. Company's Pick: *Crush, Crumble and Chomp*. Movie Monster game has the famed cinema behemoths wreaking their vengeance on the town that gave them a bad name. **$29.95.** *Address: 1042 Kiel Ct., Sunnyvale, CA 94086.*

FUNSOFT has five games for the Model I/III in the Arcade category. Fast action titles include *The Black Hole*, *Apple Panic* and *Time Runner*. Company's Pick: *Mad Mines*. The force has laid siege to your planet with an ever-tightening force field. Mad mines are being sown into your diminishing space. You'll need quick reflexes and perfect aim to destroy them and survive. **$19.95-$24.95.** *Address: 28611 Canwood St., Agoura, CA 91301.*

HAYDEN has one game for the Model I/III in the Strategy category. Naturally, it's the Company's Pick: *Sargon II*. According to Hayden, "An acknowledged chess classic," *Sargon II* offers seven different play levels. **$29.95.** *Address: 600 Suffolk St., Lowell, MA 01853.*

Continued on page 84

Illustration: Ann Neuman

BUYER'S GUIDE

Continued from page 83

HOYLE AND HOYLE SOFTWARE has three games for the Model I/III in the Strategy category. Mind expanding titles include *A Remarkable Experience* and *A Physical Experience*. Company's Pick: *A Galactic Experience.* Text adventure game finds you racing against time in order to recover a stolen computer program and solve a murder to save your planet. Disk only. **$25.** *Address: 716 South Elam Ave., Greensboro, NC 27403.*

INFOCOM has nine games for the TRS-80 line in the Strategy category. Among the thinking person's games are *Zork I, Zork II, Zork III, Starcross, Suspended* and *Deadline*. Company's Pick: *Enchanter*. Text adventure game in the spirit of *Dungeons & Dragons* has players exploring an abandoned castle filled with strange trappings and an evil warlock. Disk only. **$49.95-$59.95.** *Address: 55 Wheeler St., Cambridge, MA 02138.*

IJG has four games for the Model I/III in the Arcade category. Fast-action titles include *Interceptor, Aliens* and *Flag Race*. Company's Pick: *Space Robbers*. Intergalactic thieves are after your supplies and you must stop them before they take it all. Disk only. **$24.95.** *Address: 1953 West 11th St., Upland, CA 91786.*

INSTANT SOFTWARE has approximately 40 games for the Model I/III in the Adventure, Strategy and Arcade categories. Games requiring quick thinking include *Mission Mud, Investor's Paradise* and *IQ Test*. In the Adventure arena there's *Minotaur, Dragonquest* and *Battleground*. Coin-op inspirations feature *Swamp War, Alien Attack Force* and *Cosmic Patrol*. Company's Pick: *Danger In Orbit*. Nerves of steel and lightning reflexes will help you blast alien ships and destroy asteroids with your antimatter cannon. But watch out, floating debris can destroy your ship. **$19.95-$24.95.** *Address: Peterborough, NH 03458.*

INTRACOLOR COMMUNICATIONS has two games for the Color Computer in the Arcade category. *Robottack* is among the company's most recent shoot-em-up additions, but the Company's Pick is *Colorpede*. What does this remind you of: "As Colorpede slithers through the toadstools, you attempt to destroy it, knock out the menacing Bouncing Bug and eliminate toadstools." **$29.95-$34.95.** *Address: PO Box 1035, East Lansing, MI 48823.*

JMG SOFTWARE INTERNATIONAL has two games for the Model I/III in the Strategy and Arcade categories. The coin-op title is *Exterminate* while the Company's Pick is a Strategy game called *Supreme Ruler*. You become leader of a small and struggling country, attempting to stay alive and grow if you can. Learn what it's like to be King as you plan for war and avoid economic ruin and disaster. **$18.50-$20.50.** *Address: PO Box 598, Falls Station, Niagara Falls, NY 14303.*

KRELL SOFTWARE has eight games for the Model I/III in the Strategy and Adventure categories. Among the Adventure titles is *Pythagoras and the Dragon, Time Traveler* and *Sword of Zedek*. Thinking games include *Isaac Newton & F.G. Newton, Connections* and *Botticelli*. Company's Pick: *Odyssey In Time*. The hero (that's you) chases the villain (known as The Adversary) across historical eras, attempting to make the right decisions and prevent history from being changed. **$39.95.** *Address: 1320 Stony Brook Rd., Stony Brook, NY 11790.*

LEVEL IV PRODUCTS has three games in the Strategy category for the Color Computer. Games of mind skill include *Rubik's Cube* and *Vegas Blackjack*. Company's Pick: *Maze*. You must find your way out of an intricate maze, and ghost monsters aren't even chasing you. **$12.97.** *Address: 32429 School Craft, Livonia, MI 48150.*

MARK DATA PRODUCTS has 10 games for the Color Computer in the Adventure and Arcade categories. Adventure titles are *Calixto Island* and *Black Sanctum*. In the Arcade area there's *Astroblast, El Bandito, Galaxxon* and *Space Raiders*. Company's Pick: *Haywire*. *Berzerk* imitation complete with human, killer robots, electrified walls and "Happy Face" villain. **$24.95-$29.98.** *Address: 24001 Alicia Parkway, 226, Mission Viejo, CA 92691.*

MANHATTAN SOFTWARE has three games for the Model I/III in the Strategy category. The titles include *Gin Rummy* and *Cribbage Master II*. Company's Pick: *Casino Blackjack*. More tutorial than game, the computer attempts to teach players how to win at blackjack using the card counting method. Ken Uston watch out. **$22.95.** *Address: PO Box 1063, Woodland Hills, CA 91365.*

MICROCOMPUTER GAMES has 22 games for the Model I/III and five games for the Color Computer in the Arcade, Strategy and Adventure categories. Strategy titles include *B-1 Nuclear Bomber, Midway Campaign* and *Nukewar*. In the Arcade arena there's *Guns of Fort Defiance, Conflict* and *Galaxy*. Adventure games are represented by *Lords of Karma, Empire of the Overmind* and *Telengard*. Company's Pick: *VC*. Viet Nam War game has you commanding the chopper-based 1/509th Air Cavalry and 9/15th Field Artillery. This unconventional conflict game demands that you look out for the civilian population, while watching out for terrorists and turncoats. **$20-$25.** *Address: Avalon Hill Game Company, 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, MD 21214.*

RADIO SHACK has 16 games for the Model I/III and 30 games for the Color Computer in the Arcade, Adventure and Strategy categories. Among the coin-op-style programs are *Clowns and Balloons, Monster Maze, Galactic Attack* and *Shooting Gallery*. In the Adventure series there's *Madness and the Minotaur, Pyramid* and *Raaka-Tu*. Strategy programs include *Bridge Tutor, Card Games* and *Chess*. Company's Pick: *Poltergeist*. Based on the Steven Spielberg movie, the game has you completing three levels of play before you can rescue Carol Anne. First find clues. Then, climb stairs. Third, destroy the poltergeist. **$34.95.** *Address: One Tandy Center, 1500, Fort Worth, TX 76102.*

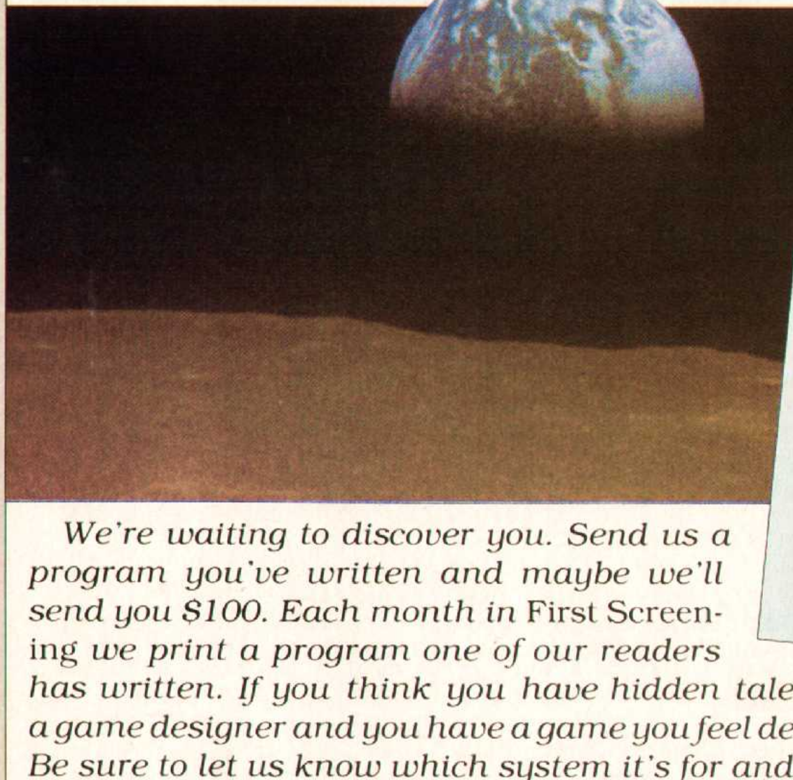
SAMS SOFTWARE has one game for the Model I/III in the Adventure area which is the Company's Pick: *Voyage of the Valkyrie*. An intrepid hero, 10 evil castles, giant warbirds and three Wagner compositions are all part of this myth-inspired game. **$34.95-$39.95.** *Address: 4300 West 62nd St., Indianapolis, IN 46268.*

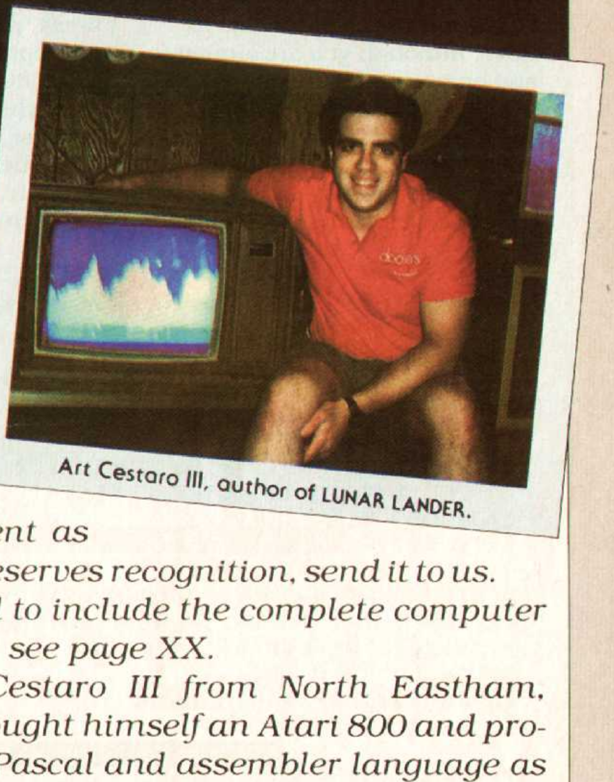
SCREENPLAY has 16 games for the Color Computer in the Adventure category. Thrill-a-minute titles include *Dunzhin, Kaiv, Wilde, Lucifer's Realm* and *Asylum*. Company's Pick: *Asylum II*. Sequel to the company's original game, *Asylum*, this one places you in an insane asylum (actually a 3-D maze) which you've got to escape from before the crazies catch up

Continued on page 92

FIRST SCREENING

LUNAR LANDER





Art Cestaro III, author of LUNAR LANDER.

We're waiting to discover you. Send us a program you've written and maybe we'll send you $100. Each month in First Screening *we print a program one of our readers has written. If you think you have hidden talent as a game designer and you have a game you feel deserves recognition, send it to us. Be sure to let us know which system it's for and to include the complete computer printout. For more information on how to enter, see page XX.*

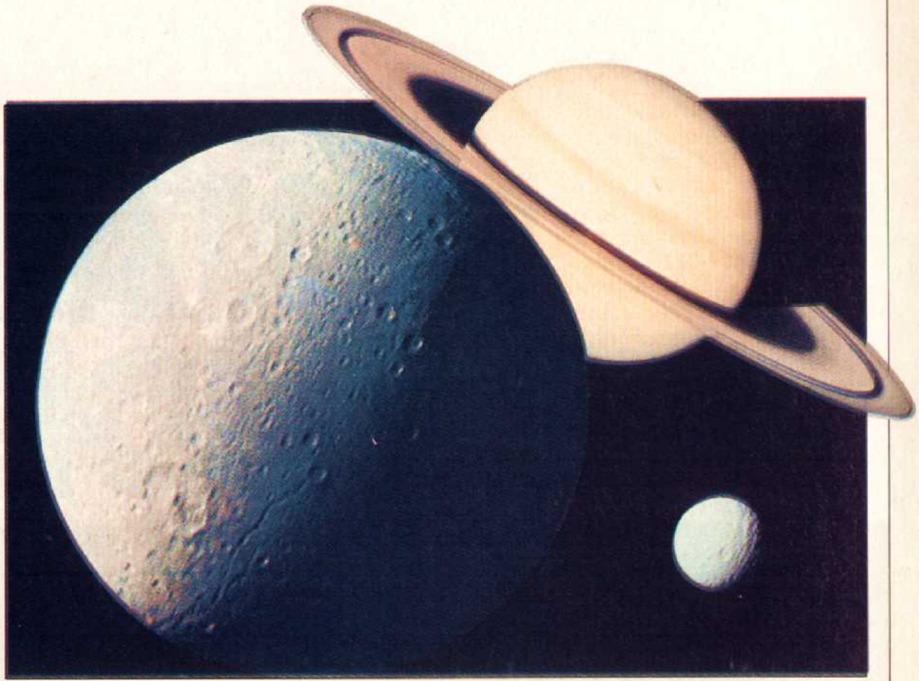
This month's winner is 19-year old Art Cestaro III from North Eastham, Massachusetts. Two and a half years ago, Art bought himself an Atari 800 and proceeded to teach himself BASIC. He now knows Pascal and assembler language as well. He wrote his Atari game, Lunar Lander *two years ago and says he can do "much better stuff now."*

The Game

Lunar Lander is a space shuttle simulation game with great graphics in which you try to land your space shuttle in a safe place. If you crash, the computer will tell you the extent of your damages in a phrase that goes something like this: "You have just destroyed a 4 megabuck lander." At the end of the game, the American flag appears and the Star Spangled Banner plays in the background. Everyone must salute. Just kidding.

How to Play

To load *Lunar Lander* you must have the BASIC cart in and at least 24K RAM. After typing it in, type RUN and a title will come on. This may take a couple of seconds. After



this, the computer will ask you what skill level you want—one or two with two being the hardest. Then it will ask you if you want Space Mines floating around the lunar surface. You can either be conservative in your approach and say "no" or you can be fatalistic about the whole thing and say "yes." Remember, if you collide with one of these Space Mines, you blow up right away.

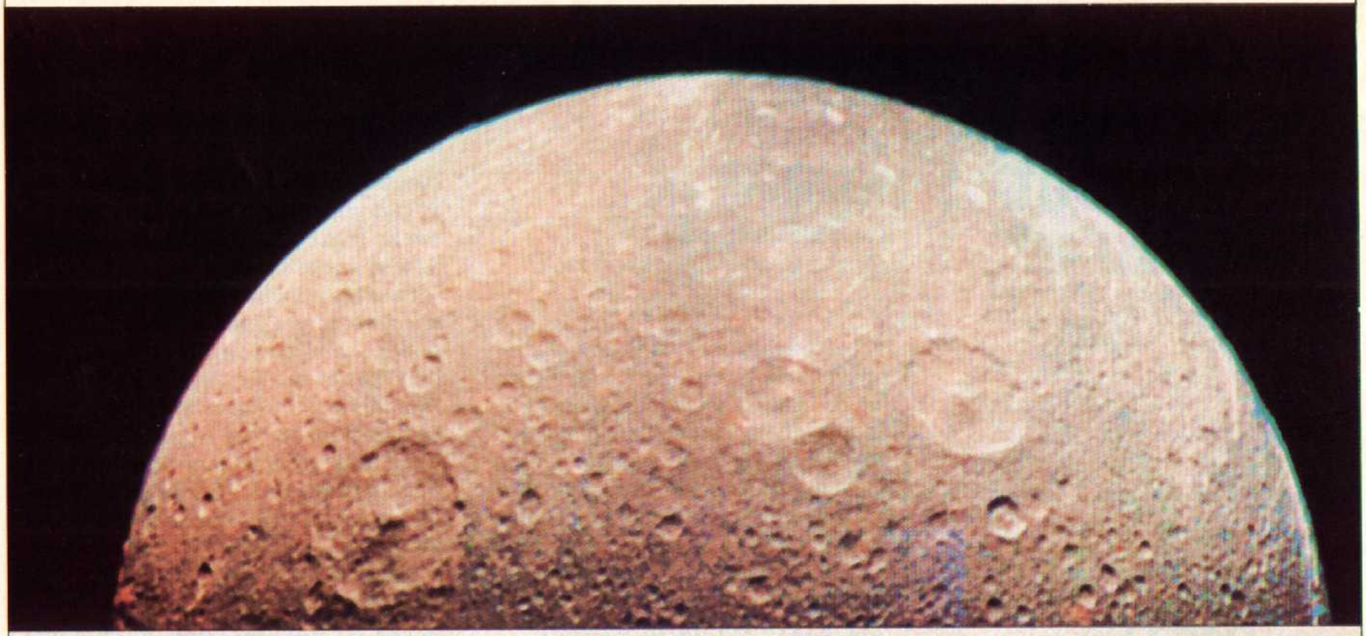
After you type "yes" or "no" in answer to the Space Mine question, press the RETURN key and the landscape will be drawn on the screen. Press the fire button on the joystick in order to see where your landing pads are. Your landing craft will begin to descend at this time. Push your joystick in the direction in which you want your rocket to move. Although you are aiming to land on one of the designated landing areas (the white lines), you can actually land anywhere that is at least as wide as your ship.

Should something go wrong as you are approaching the landing areas, you can abort your landing attempt by pushing the firing button. This will give you a quick upward thrust. Look out, however, because this maneuver uses up a lot of fuel and fuel conservation is key here. There are no friendly Texaco men up here to fill your tank. Run out of fuel and you will crash.

At the end of the game you will be asked if you want to play again. To answer, simply type in "yes" (if you want to) and "no" (if you don't, as if you couldn't figure that out for yourself) and hit the RETURN key. Have fun!☐

```
0 REM LUNAR LANDER By Art Cestaro III
5 GOSUB 32000
13 DIM A1$(2),AG$(1),A$(11)
14 GOSUB 800:SC=0
19 GRAPHICS 7:POKE 756,CH:POKE 709,202:POKE 708,6:POKE 710,132:POKE 752,1
20 Y=INT(37*RND(1)+18):L1=INT(37*RND(1))*2:L2=INT(37*RND(1))*2+80:COLOR 1:D=1
30 FOR X=0 TO 159 STEP 2:Y1=INT(15*RND(1)+Y-5*D):PLOT X,80:DRAWTO X,Y:PLOT X+1,8
0:DRAWTO X+1,(Y+Y1)/2
40 Y=Y1:IF Y>60 THEN Y=Y-10:D=2
45 IF Y<20 THEN Y=Y+10:D=1
50 IF X<>L1 AND X<>L2 THEN NEXT X:GOTO 62
60 FOR I=X+2 TO X+7:PLOT I,80:DRAWTO I,Y1:NEXT I:COLOR 2:PLOT I-5,Y1+1:DRAWTO I-
2,Y1+1:COLOR 1:X=X+6:NEXT X
62 ON DD GOTO 63,64
63 DS=0.1:XS=3:GOTO 70
64 DS=0.18:XS=3.5
70 ? "           * * Press Fire * * "
71 REM
72 IF STRIG(0)=1 THEN 71
73 ? ">            ** Landing Sites ** "
74 FOR W=1 TO 6:POKE 709,0:SOUND 0,150,10,10:FOR G=1 TO 50:NEXT G
75 SOUND 0,0,0,0:POKE 709,202:FOR G=1 TO 50:NEXT G:NEXT W
76 ? ">":IF A1$="Y" THEN GOSUB 700
80 COLOR 2:X=4:Y=3:PLOT 4,3:PLOT 3,4:PLOT 5,4:YS=0
90 GOSUB 1500
100 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y:PLOT X-1,Y+1:PLOT X+1,Y+1:X=X+XS:Y=Y+YS:YS=YS+DS
105 IF Y<3 THEN YS=ABS(YS)
106 POKE 77,0
107 IF F<60 AND F>40 THEN A$="LOW ON FUEL":POKE 710,20:NN=0:GOSUB 3000
108 IF F<2 THEN F=0:A$="OUT OF FUEL":POKE 710,50:NN=0:GOSUB 3000:SOUND 0,130,10,
15
110 LOCATE X,Y,Z:LOCATE X-1,Y+1,Z1:LOCATE X+1,Y+1,Z2
120 P=STICK(0):IF P<>15 OR STRIG(0)<>1 AND F>0 THEN GOSUB 200:GOTO 130
125 SOUND 0,0,0,0
130 COLOR 2:PLOT X,Y:PLOT X-1,Y+1:PLOT X+1,Y+1:IF Z OR Z1 OR Z2 THEN 300
140 LOCATE X-1,Y+2,Z:LOCATE X+1,Y+2,Z1:IF Z AND Z1 AND YS<1.5 THEN 400
150 POKE 656,0:POKE 657,9:? YS*4;"  ";:POKE 657,23:? F;" "
160 POKE 656,2:POKE 657,9:? XS*4;"  ";:POKE 657,24:? SC;
170 IF X+XS<5 OR X+XS>156 THEN XS=-XS
175 IF Y<3 THEN YS=ABS(YS)
180 GOTO 100
200 IF P>8 AND P<12 AND F>1 THEN XS=XS-0.2:F=F-1:SOUND 0,10,8,15
210 IF P>4 AND P<8 AND F>1 THEN XS=XS+0.2:F=F-1:SOUND 0,15,8,15
215 IF STRIG(0)=0 AND F>1 THEN GOSUB 5000
220 IF P=6 OR P=10 OR P=14 AND F>1 THEN YS=YS-0.2:F=F-2:SOUND 0,20,8,15
230 IF P=9 OR P=13 OR P=5 AND F>1 THEN YS=YS+0.2:F=F-1:SOUND 0,25,8,15
250 RETURN
300 ? "}":GOSUB 500:EXS=INT(RND(0)*10)+7
301 FOR E=0 TO EXS:A=X-E:B=X+E:C=Y-E:D=Y+E:SETCOLOR 1,RND(0)*16,E*2:IF A<1 THEN
A=1
302 IF B>159 THEN B=159
303 IF C<4 THEN C=4
304 IF D>80 THEN D=80
305 SOUND 0,6,0,E+3:SOUND 1,21,0,E+3:SOUND 2,27,0,E+3:SOUND 3,40,0,E+3
306 COLOR 2:PLOT X,C:DRAWTO A,Y:DRAWTO X,D:DRAWTO B,Y:DRAWTO X,C:NEXT E
307 FOR GG=0 TO 20:SETCOLOR 1,RND(0)*16,GG+4:NEXT GG
308 FOR E=EXS TO 0 STEP -1:A=X-E:B=X+E:C=Y-E:D=Y+E:SETCOLOR 1,RND(0)*16,E*2:IF A
<1 THEN A=1
309 IF B>159 THEN B=159
310 IF C<4 THEN C=4
311 IF D>80 THEN D=80
312 SOUND 0,6,0,E:SOUND 1,21,0,E:SOUND 2,27,0,E:SOUND 3,40,0,E
313 COLOR 0:PLOT X,C:DRAWTO A,Y:DRAWTO X,D:DRAWTO B,Y:DRAWTO X,C:NEXT E
315 GOSUB 500
320 SETCOLOR 1,0,12
324 M=INT(RND(0)*12)*2
325 R=INT(RND(1)*3+1):ON R GOTO 326,327,329
326 ? "You destroyed a ";M;" MEGA BUCK LANDER":GOTO 330
327 IF Y>20 THEN ? "You made a ";INT(RND(1)*4+2);" mile wide CRATER!!!":GOTO 330
328 ? "YOU NEED A LITTLE MORE PRACTICE!!":GOTO 330
329 ? "You are a lousy PILOT!!"
330 IF RND(0)*20>11-DD THEN TL=INT(RND(0)*200)+50:? " TANKS DESTROYED. FUEL LOST
 ";TL;" UNITS":F=F-TL:TL=0
340 FOR G=1 TO 1000:NEXT G
345 IF F<2 THEN 3500
350 GOTO 440
400 FOR H=15 TO 0 STEP -1:SOUND 0,120+H,8,H:NEXT H
402 SOUND 0,0,0,0:SOUND 1,0,0,0:? "}           ** The Eagle has Landed ** ":FOR H=1 T
O 300:NEXT H
408 PP=710:RESTORE 1200:GOSUB 650:RESTORE 1210:GOSUB 650:RESTORE 1220:GOSUB 650:
? "}":S=100:POKE 710,130
420 IF (X>L1+2 AND X<L1+8) OR (X>L2+2 AND X<L2+8) THEN S=50+INT(RND(0)*10)
430 ? "YOU SCORED ";S;" POINTS":SC=SC+S
435 IF RND(0)*10<4 THEN BF=INT((RND(0)*100)+50)*DD:? " BONUS  FUEL: ";BF;" UNITS
"
439 F=F+BF:BF=0:FOR I=1 TO 850:NEXT I
440 GRAPHICS 2+16:POKE 756,CH:POKE 708,0:POKE 712,24:POSITION 1,3:? #6;"score :
";SC:POSITION 1,6:POKE 711,68
441 ? #6;"FUEL  : ";F:H=0:POSITION 4,9:? #6;"press trigger"
445 H=H+1:IF STRIG(0)=0 THEN 19
446 IF H>800 THEN 19
447 GOTO 445
500 COLOR 0:PLOT X,Y:PLOT X-1,Y+1:PLOT X+1,Y+1:FOR L=8 TO 0 STEP -2:FOR L1=1 TO
8:POKE 712,15*(RND(1)*17)
501 SOUND 0,99,8,L:SOUND 1,75,8,L:SOUND 2,60,8,L:SOUND 3,20,8,L
502 NEXT L1:NEXT L:POKE 712,0:RETURN
505 RETURN
600 V=0:RESTORE 1000
610 READ J,K,L,M:SOUND 0,J,10,6:SOUND 1,K,10,4:SOUND 2,L,10,2:SOUND 3,M,10,2
```

```
611 V=V+1:IF V>48 THEN 620
613 FOR Z=1 TO 50:NEXT Z:GOTO 610
620 FOR Z=1 TO 275:NEXT Z:FOR G=0 TO 3:SOUND G,0,0,0:NEXT G:RETURN
650 FOR G=1 TO 6
655 READ P,K:SOUND 0,P,10,10:SOUND 1,P+1,10,11:POKE PP,P
660 FOR XX=1 TO K-14:NEXT XX:NEXT G:SOUND 0,0,0,0:SOUND 1,0,0,0:RETURN
700 FOR MI=0 TO INT(RND(0)*6)*DD:D=INT(RND(0)*146)+10:DY=INT(RND(0)*30)+1:COLOR
3:SOUND 0,80,10,10
705 PLOT D,DY:PLOT D+1,DY:PLOT D+2,DY-1:PLOT D+3,DY-1:FOR MII=1 TO 25:NEXT MII
710 SOUND 0,0,0,0:FOR MII=1 TO 25:NEXT MII:NEXT MI:RETURN
800 GRAPHICS 2:POKE 756,CH:POKE 710,0:POKE 752,1:COLOR 248:PLOT 0,0:DRAWTO 19,0
802 DRAWTO 19,9:DRAWTO 0,9:DRAWTO 0,0
803 POSITION 6,3:? #6;"LUNAR":POSITION 7,5:? #6;"LANDER"
804 COLOR 90:PLOT 2,8:PLOT 17,8
805 ? "}↓     Z By Art.V.Cestaro III Z ":? "↓                  Copyright 1983"
807 PP=711:RESTORE 1100:GOSUB 650:POKE 711,152
815 ? :? "           SKILL LEVEL (1 OR 2)? "
816 POKE 708,INT(15*RND(0))*16+9
818 IF PEEK(764)=31 THEN DD=1:GOTO 825
819 IF PEEK(764)=30 THEN DD=2:GOTO 825
820 POKE 764,255:GOTO 816
825 SOUND 0,0,0,0:SOUND 1,0,0,0:POKE 764,255:? CHR$(253):POKE 764,255
829 TRAP 829:? "}↓    Do you want SPACE MINES (Y/N) ";:INPUT A1$:TRAP 33333
830 IF A1$(1,1)="Y" OR A1$(1,1)="N" THEN 833
831 IF A$(1,1)=" " THEN GOTO 829
832 ? "}":GOTO 829
833 ON DD GOTO 834,835
834 F=500:DS=0.1:XS=3:RETURN
835 F=350:DS=0.18:XS=3.5:RETURN
1000 DATA 81,108,128,162
1010 DATA 81,108,128,162,96,108,128,162,121,162,193,243,121,162,193,243,96,121,1
62,193,96,121,162,193
1020 DATA 81,108,128,162,81,108,128,162,60,96,121,144,60,96,121,144,60,96,121,14
4,60,96,121,144
1030 DATA 47,64,96,153,53,64,96,153,60,72,96,243,60,72,96,243,96,121,193,243,96,
121,193,243,85,108,121,217
1040 DATA 85,108,121,217,81,108,128,162,81,108,128,162,81,108,128,182,81,108,128
,182
1050 DATA 81,108,81,193,81,108,128,217,47,60,81,243,47,60,81,243,47,60,81,243,53
,64,91,217,60,72,96,193,60
1055 DATA 72,96
1060 DATA 193,64,81,108,162,64,81,108,162,64,81,108,162,72,81,121,162,64,81,108,
162,64,81,108,162
1070 DATA 60,81,121,193,60,81,121,193,60,81,60,193,60,81,60,193,81,108,128,162,8
1,108,128,162
1080 DATA 96,128,162,182,96,128,162,182,121,162,193,243,121,162,193,243
1100 DATA 96,75,85,75,108,75,216,75,144,200,144,10,0,0
1200 DATA 140,30,110,30,90,30,75,70,90,30,75,100,0,0
1210 DATA 130,30,100,30,80,30,65,70,80,30,65,100,0,0
1220 DATA 120,30,90,30,70,30,55,70,70,30,55,100,0,0
1500 POKE 656,0:? CHR$(27);CHR$(29);"SPEED:":POKE 656,2:? CHR$(27);CHR$(31);"SPE
ED:"
1510 POKE 656,0:POKE 657,18:? "FUEL:":POKE 656,2:POKE 657,18:? "SCORE:"
1515 POKE 656,0:POKE 657,27:? "|←↓|←↓█"
1520 RETURN
3000 POKE 656,NN:POKE 657,28:? A$:RETURN
3500 GRAPHICS 2:POKE 756,CH:POKE 711,48:SETCOLOR 4,7,0:POKE 710,10
3501 POKE 708,198:POKE 709,0
3502 COLOR 248:FOR G=1 TO 11 STEP 2:PLOT 0,G:DRAWTO 19,G:NEXT G
3503 COLOR 216:FOR G=0 TO 10 STEP 2:PLOT 0,G:DRAWTO 19,G:NEXT G
3508 POSITION 2,4:? #6;"FINAL SCORE:  SC:GOSUB 600:POKE 752,1
3510 ? "}↓    WANT TO PLAY AGAIN (Y/N) ";:INPUT AG$:IF AG$="Y" THEN 14
3511 IF AG$(1,1)<>"N" THEN 3510
3520 ? "}":? "            * * GOOD BYE * *  ":END
5000 IF Y<3 OR F<3 THEN RETURN
5005 NN=2:A$="**ABORTED**":GOSUB 3000
5006 SOUND 0,150,10,6:FOR G=1 TO 8:NEXT G:SOUND 0,0,0,0:NN=2
5010 A$="             ":GOSUB 3000:YS=YS-1:F=F-15:IF Y<3 THEN YS=ABS(YS)
5011 RETURN
32000 GRAPHICS 7+16:DL=PEEK(561)-8:GRAPHICS 2:POKE 710,0:POKE 752,1
32005 POSITION 3,2:? #6;"ELECTRONIC FUN":POSITION 8,4:? #6;"AND":POSITION 7,6:?
```



```
#6;"GAMES":POSITION 6,8:? #6;"presents"
32006 FOR G=252 TO 0 STEP -1:POKE 53274,PEEK(53770):SOUND 0,G,10,14:SOUND 1,G+2,
10,12:NEXT G
32008 SOUND 0,0,0,0:SOUND 1,0,0,0:? "INITIALIZING... Please stand by."
32019 START=(DL+1)*256:CH=START/256
32020 FOR Z=0 TO 1023:POKE START+Z,PEEK(57344+Z):NEXT Z:RESTORE 32100
32030 POKE 708,INT(15*RND(0))*16+8:READ X:IF X=-1 THEN RESTORE :RETURN
32040 FOR Y=0 TO 7:READ Z:POKE X+Y+START,Z:NEXT Y:GOTO 32030
32100 DATA 64,30,24,24,56,56,56,62,0
32101 DATA 72,120,24,24,28,28,28,124,0
32102 DATA 128,127,99,99,99,99,99,127,0
32103 DATA 136,56,24,24,24,24,62,62,0
32104 DATA 144,127,3,3,127,96,96,127,0
32105 DATA 152,126,6,6,127,7,7,127,0
32106 DATA 160,112,112,119,119,127,7,7,0
32107 DATA 168,127,96,96,127,3,3,127,0
32108 DATA 176,124,108,96,127,99,99,127,0
32109 DATA 184,127,3,3,31,24,24,24,0
32110 DATA 192,62,54,54,127,119,119,127,0
32111 DATA 200,127,99,99,127,7,7,7,0
32112 DATA 248,127,99,3,31,28,0,28,0
32113 DATA 264,63,51,51,127,115,115,115,0
32114 DATA 272,126,102,102,127,103,103,127,0
32115 DATA 280,127,103,96,96,99,99,127,0
32116 DATA 288,126,102,102,119,119,119,127,0
32117 DATA 296,127,96,96,127,112,112,127,0
32118 DATA 304,127,96,96,127,112,112,112,0
32119 DATA 312,127,99,96,111,103,103,127,0
32120 DATA 328,127,28,28,28,28,28,127,0
32121 DATA 352,48,48,48,112,112,112,126,0
32122 DATA 360,99,119,119,107,99,99,99,0
32123 DATA 368,103,119,127,111,103,103,103,0
32124 DATA 376,127,99,99,103,103,103,127,0
32125 DATA 384,127,99,99,127,112,112,112,0
32126 DATA 400,126,103,103,126,108,102,99,0
32127 DATA 408,127,96,127,3,115,115,127,0
32128 DATA 416,127,28,28,28,28,28,28,0
32129 DATA 424,103,103,103,103,103,103,127,0
32130 DATA 448,255,255,255,255,255,255,255,255
32131 DATA 456,102,102,102,60,24,24,24,0
32132 DATA 464,104,61,39,60,24,36,66,66
32133 DATA 736,24,24,60,60,126,102,195,129
32134 DATA 744,129,195,102,126,60,60,24,24
32135 DATA 760,192,112,60,31,60,112,192,0
32136 DATA -1
```

In order for us to consider your entry, we need the following items: a complete computer program, a brief game description, photographs or drawings of the graphics, a picture of you and a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Send it all to: First Screening, Electronic Fun, *350 East 81st St., New York, NY 10028. Include your phone number so we can reach you.*

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STRATEGY

Continued from page 35

chance to give you a good kick.

OTHER

Technically, this is the miscellaneous category into which fall the games which very uncooperatively refuse to be categorized. One of the least realistic simulations is *Smithereens* from Odyssey. In this two-player game you man a catapult with unlimited ammunition (boulders) and your single solitary object is to send these boulders careening through the medieval air so that they'll crash down upon your opponent's castle.

This is fun for a while but rapidly gets boring, and it is possibly the lack of interest in activities such as this that brought the Middle Ages to such an abrupt end. That and the Black Plague.

And speaking of plagues, there's *Epidemic* from Strategic Simulations for the Apple II. Nothing as prosaic as the plague will do here, though. Alien microbes threaten Earth with a worldwide epidemic if you, the head of the Disease Control Center, don't act fast. Your weapons consist of interferon, vaccines, X-rays, gamma globulin and gene splicing. But all of these medical miracles can't be administered to all 14 regions at the same time. Often you'll find you've successfully brought Canada and South America to stasis level only to have Europe delirious with fever. A fatalistic approach is often the best medicine because sometimes you may have to sacrifice one area for the greater good of the rest of the world.

If you think nuclear power is to be taken lightly, try *Scram* from APX. It gives you the feeling of what it's like to control a nuclear power station. The documentation is superb giving you an accurate study of the US nuclear power industry today. But best of all is the combination of logical mental strategy with very nicely animated computer graphics. The workings of the power station are displayed along with many numerical indicators that must be monitored. When you shut down a valve between two cooling tanks, the visible flow of water stops.

Less volatile but potentially as dangerous as a meltdown is politics, and you can get a feel of how it is to run for president in *President Elect* from Strategic Simulations for the Apple II. Using the game, you can simulate any presidential campaign from 1960 to 1984 using either historical candidates or ones of your own choosing (for example, Mr. T). You can even run for president against Reagan if you like. Each of the three parties tries to get its man (or woman) into office by making campaign stops, speeches and holding debates. You plan national and regional advertising and try to sew up your constituents in the nine weeks (nine turns) from Labor Day to Election Day.

Many have likened politicians to criminals, so it is a only a small step from *President Elect* to *Police Artist* from Sir-Tech for the Apple II. The three games on this disk are simple and graphically captivating. The first gives you a quick look at the suspect (the computer can generate over a million different faces) then marches faces in for a lineup. Your job: Remember the face and pick it out. The second game gives you a peek at the subject but instead of picking him out of a lineup, you've got to recreate the face exactly by combining different mouths, chins, noses, eyes and hair. You can peek at the suspect as many times as you like but your score will suffer. The third game simply allows you to draw your own faces.

Finally, there's *Truckin'* from Imagic for Intellivision. This game uses a split screen to allow two drivers to select different routes to the same destination. The entire US highway system is so faithfully reproduced that you can use your own Atlas for navigation. You'll find thousands of ways to get from San Francisco to New York or between any two cities you want, but your route should reflect the type of load you plan to carry. Ten-four, good buddy.□

ARCADES

Continued from page 49

the seventh best (761,400) on *Donkey Kong Jr.* A legendary figure. Starship Video!'s co-owner, Steve Josephs, held the U.S. record for *Journey* at 1,645,125. The first person in the country to break one million on *Xevious* had done it here. It was here, on New Year's Eve, that Jack Carpenter played *Robotron* for 17 hours on one token. John Pretzer scored 10,433,525 on *Q*Bert* in 24 hours of continuous play under this roof. I had come home!

And these were not modified machines. Says Steve, "They're all set at factory levels except *Dig Dug* and *Centipede* which are set at harder levels." He adds, "If a player lets us know he's going for a record, we'll stay open late and provide drinks and promote it."

Steve calls Twin Galaxies in Iowa every day to check on national high scores. A real vidhead, he doesn't look like what you'd expect an addict to look like. At 26, he's got the mild-mannered appearance of Clark Kent. He's soft-spoken and doesn't smile much, but inside is the soul of a space cowboy. Starship Video! was completely his and his partners' idea, from the airlock you pass through to get inside, to the token dispensing robot (now defunct) that circled the floor.

There are 50 carefully chosen machines with very few dupes. The most popular was (surprise!) *Mario Brothers*, with *Pole Position* running a close second. *Star Trek, Gyruss, Journey, Champion Baseball* and *Mappy* were also hot. Tokens are five for a dollar and seven for a dollar on Sunday.

Steve says, "We were mainly responsible for the technical update that Atari put out on *Pole Position*. There were eight problems we found with it. For instance, sometimes it would not retain high scores. There was a problem with the car splitting in half. And if you didn't reset the pedal when you first turned the machine on everyday, you couldn't get it up to maximum speed." Steve can fix the machines himself and helped put one of his 15-year-old ace players through repair school.

I dropped a token into *Time Pilot*. Jim Morrison was singing "L.A. Woman" and I fantasized about sinking roots into southern California soil. With a place like Starship in the neighborhood, maybe I could be happy out here. All this suburban bliss was giving me funny ideas. Or maybe it was just those nine-foot stereo speakers shaking up my brain. I tore myself away from the game and ran out to my car. No, no, I can't stay in Upland. The highway is my home. I've got a job to do. □

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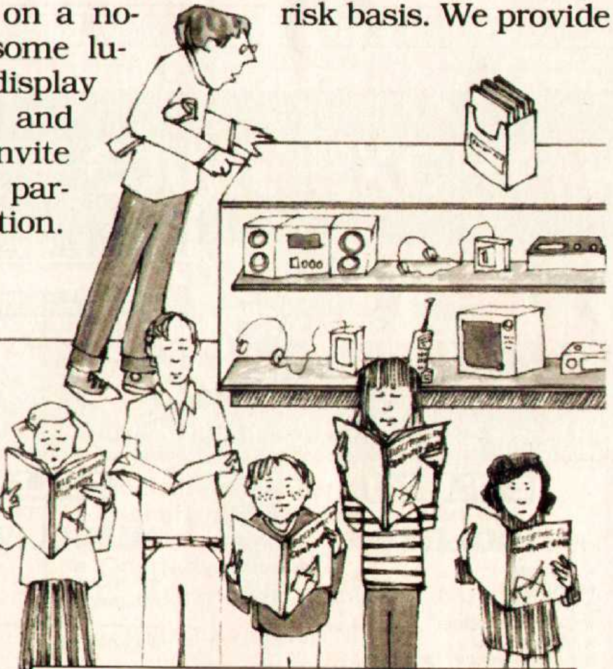

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BUYER'S GUIDE

Continued from page 84

with you. **$19.95.** *Address: PO Box 3558, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.*

SPECTRAL ASSOCIATES has approximately 70 games in the Arcade and Adventure categories for the Color Computer. In the Adventure arena there's *Keys of the Wizard*, *Pirates Ahoy* and *Maze Escape*. Arcade-style offerings include *Lancer*, *Ghost Gobbler*, *Ms. Gobbler*, *Defense*, *Whirlybird Run* and *Planet Invasion*. Company's Pick: *Lunar-Rover Patrol*. Guide your Lunar Rover along the moon's surface as a barrage of obstacles severely impedes your movement. **$21.95.** *Address: 3420 South 90th St., Tacoma, WA 98409.*

STRATEGIC SIMULATIONS has four games for the Model I/III in the Strategy category. The titles include *The Battle of Shiloh*, *Tigers in the Snow* and *Battle for Normandy*. Company's Pick: *Knight in the Desert*. War game simulation based on the famous North African campaign of World War II. Players must assign supply and re-supply priority for each unit before operations begin. The object is to sweep your troops across the African coast. Disk only. **$39.95.** *Address: 883 Stierline Rd., Building A-200, Mountain View, CA 94043-1983.*

STRICTLY COLOR SOFTWARE has five games in the Strategy category for the Color Computer. Among the Strategy titles are *Across the Rubicon*, *Galactic Taipan* and *Rubicon-II*. Company's Pick: *Mission: Empire!* Starting with one planet, incomplete intelligence and limited resources, you must conquer the galaxy. 32K required. **$19.95.** *Address: PO Box 382, West Point, PA 19486.*

SUBLOGIC has two games for the Model I/III in the Strategy/Simulation category. *Forest Fire Dispatcher* is one of the offerings while the Company's Pick is *Flight Simulator*. Real time, 3-D, out-the-window view of your flight is updated an average of three times per second based on your ability to control your craft. Game also allows for dog fights with machine guns. **$25-$33.50.** *Address: 713 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign, IL 61820.*

SYNAPSE has five games for the Color Computer in the Arcade category. Titles include *Picnic Paranoia*, *Shamus* and *Protector II*. Company's Pick: *Drelbs*. Save the peace-loving Drelbs from the evil Trollabors on the atomic flip grid and beware of the princess. **$34.95.** *Address: 5221 Central Ave., Richmond, CA 94804.*

TOM MIX SOFTWARE has 18 games for the Color Computer in the Arcade and Adventure category. Arcade titles include *Katerpillar Attack*, *War Kings* and *Protectors*. In the Adventure area there's *Trek-16*, *Shipwreck* and *Escape from Spectre*. Company's Pick: *The King*. *Donkey Kong*-imitator features four screens and high-resolution graphics. **$26.95-$29.95.** *Address: 3424 College N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505.*

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SCREENPLAYS

Continued from page 21

across. There are, though, two types of moving ground targets you should be familiar with. Mobile bases always pop up in the same place and sure as the sun sets, always move in the same pattern. They'll probably take a shot at you, so blow them away as soon as possible. Anticipate their movements and lead your shots accordingly.

Tanks are a bit smarter. They have the ability to anticipate your attack. Since they cannot shoot back at you they are for the most part to be avoided with little or no consequence. If you are feeling nasty though, launch two shells in rapid succession. One of them is certain to be on target.

Underground domes are by far the juiciest targets. They are also the hardest to hit simply because they are underground. Two shots are needed here—one to uncover it and another to destroy it. And how do you go about locating these subterranean installations? Watch the cross hairs! If they glow over a patch of ground that appears unoccupied, something must be buried there. Finding one of these is worth 2,000 points. You get an additional two grand for blowing it up.

In the aerial arena there are three foes that require special handling. The first is the mother ship. Since it travels at an altitude lower than yours, aid to air missiles are of no use against it. As in *Zaxxon*, multiple hits are called for here. On the mother ship's back you'll notice a cluster of glowing hatches. A well-placed shot on any of these hot spots will slow the ship down. A second charge in the large center hatch finishes the job off.

Black balls are especially dangerous so watch closely for their appearance. These spheres behave a lot like a device the army uses called an Antipersonnel Shrapnel Bomb. When it detonates, it releases a deadly, all encompassing swath of bullets. Your only defense in this situation is a good offense. Fire at first sight and hope they don't explode. ☐

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INTERVIEW

Continued from page 42

brella," you've learned a few things. You've learned that the computer understood the command. If it says, "I can't do that here," you haven't learned anything. Was it that you did it at the wrong time? Was it that if you took it to another place it would respond differently? It wasn't responsive.

What we've done is taken this a step farther. There's a concept, for example, in most games of putting things in other things. In most games, only certain things can go into others. In ours, if there's a container, you can put anything in it up to its capacity. It's not like there's some special case that says you can only put the fish in this bowl. If there's a bowl, why can't you put a piece of paper in it? Now, maybe the piece of paper will be ruined when you put it in the bowl because the bowl is wet but that's one of the things we try to do a lot—let the player do whatever he wants and suffer the consequences. Most people who finish *Deadline* haven't seen half the game because we've included a lot of situations that may not have any bearing on the outcome. What you see in other games is the only things that work are the things that are right. In other words, putting something in something else wouldn't work unless it were the solution to the problem, but why not? If someone wants to do that, why not let him? If someone wants to look under something or behind something or at something or in something, all those things are different and we understand that they are different and granted that in most cases it just says, "There's nothing but dust there," or "There's nothing there," but at least you know you were understood. That's very important because these games are inherently frustrating at some level because no matter how good it is, it won't understand all the words you use. But the ones that only understand two word commands or have very small vocabularies that won't allow you to take something unless you use the *one* correct word; those are even more frustrating. If there's a tape recorder in a bag in *Deadline*, I can take that recorder by saying, "Take recorder out of bag," "Pick up the tape recorder," or "Get the tape recorder."

EF: So you've made the game more fluent in English.

MB: Yes. People talk in different ways and you don't want to play chase the word. People like this sort of game because they like to interact with the story. They don't want to have to fight with the program. Anything that comes between you and the game hurts the game. The fact that it understands the concept of characters moving, makes it easier to play this as if it were in a real place, a place that makes sense, as opposed to a very contrived, very small world where nothing works the way it's supposed to. Still, it's all a matter of degrees. While I think we do this better than anyone else, I still look at it and say, "I wish I could have done this or that." A lot of it is how much you can fit on a disk. Some of our games are 110K.

EF: How many K is DEADLINE?

MB: *Deadline* is our biggest game—the biggest we can do and still run on all these machines. It's 110K. Each machine can accept a different amount of K; on an Apple disk you can get 140K, on IBM you can get 360 with double density, etc. But if you want to run on a wide range of machines, the least common denominator is 110. You can get away with 110 on every machine. And it's nice we can have one source for all of the games. We don't have to worry about the version on this machine being different form the version on another machine.

EF: Which machine do you prefer to work on? Which is your favorite one?

MB: We don't write our games on any of the microcomputers. We use the mainframe and do all our

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writing on it. If you ask which machine I prefer to play it on, the Apple and the IBM are nice because their disk drives are faster. Games run much faster on those. The Atari drives themselves are not slow but they use a serial controller which is the inexpensive way to go and for an inexpensive machine it's fine. Very few games exercise disk drives the way ours do because ours are constantly swapping information. It's not an overlay system. It's basically taking things off the system as it needs it but once it's there, it doesn't need to be retrieved again. On any of the games, you'll notice that if you walk into a new room, the first thing the machine will do is go to the disk, click, click, click and you'll have the information and if you do another look, it doesn't have to go to the disk. It tries to be very smart.

EF: I liked the book on the table in the living room—the novel called DEADLINE.

MB: Did you read the ending?

EF: No. The computer wouldn't let me read all the way through it.

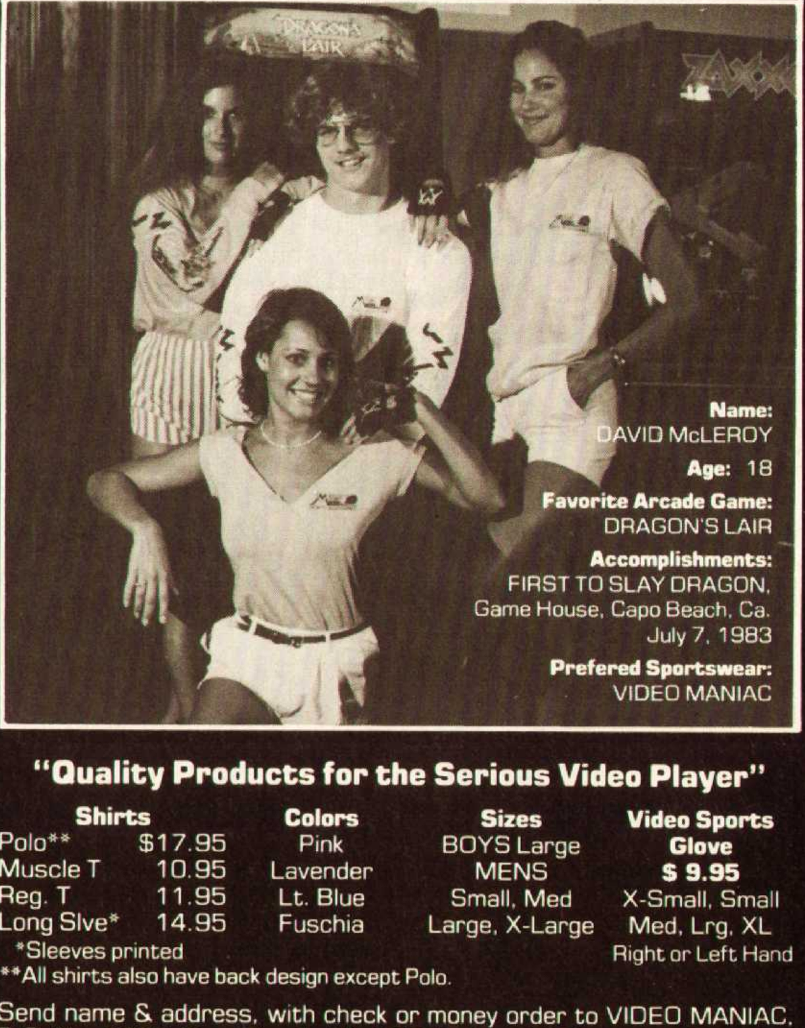
MB: You should read the ending. You can say, "Read the ending." If you say that, it tells you something absurd like, "You turn to the last page of the book and read the ending in which the detective picks up the book and reads the ending, gets totally disgusted with himself, takes out his gun and shoots himself." And then it says, "You take out your gun and, disgusted with yourself, you kill yourself." And that's the end of the game. We felt that anyone who's cheating deserves this end.

EF: What other things should I do in DEADLINE?

MB: You should try flushing the toilet, taking a shower, swimming in the lake, eating anything you find. Something that's very nice about the game is all the things that are there that are really just throwaways but make the whole thing more fun. There's a lot of humor in all our games. There's a shower in *Deadline*. You can say, "Take a shower," you can say, "Get in the shower," you can say, "Sit on the toilet," you can say, "Flush the toilet" and the machine will respond. There's a mirror in the Master Bathroom. You can say, "Look in mirror," and it will respond. It's funny. Any object that's there, we've tried to make act like the real thing. Even if it's absurd.

EF: How many people do you ask the questions to in order to come up with all the possible answers to any one question? How do you anticipate what people are going to ask so that you can come up with the appropriate wisecrack or response?

MB: We don't program that way at all. For example, we have a verb called "kiss" and the program that handles that idea knows that, if there's nothing special about the



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situation, to print something snide like, "I'd rather kiss a pig," or something like that. It would do that if you said, "Kiss frog," "Kiss table," whatever you want. But you *can* special case a particular combination. For example, "Kiss frog." The program would ask itself, is there anything special about the frog? Is "Kiss frog" interesting? If not, it would print the standard response. If so, it would print something special. In certain cases we ask, "Is it a person?" If the thing you're trying to kiss in, say, *Deadline*, is one of the characters, then it will print something that says something like, "Sub-statute 27 of paragraph 9 prohibits the kissing of suspects." Otherwise it will print, "I'd rather kiss a pig."

EF: But you have to anticipate a certain number of actions that could be taken—no matter how absurd—with a given object.

MD: Yes and no. When we start a game we have a certain number of verbs that are understood and that have default actions so that even if you don't special case it it will say something. Among those verbs, whenever we create an object, we try to figure out if there's anything special. Some of them are obvious. If you create a window, someone is going to try to break windows, climb through windows, look through windows, so you put answers to those commands down—as many as you can think of. If it's a frog, you know someone is going to try to kiss a frog. In *Enchanter*, which is one of our new fantasy games, there are magic spells and those are the most fun because these magic spells are absurd. You can use them on almost anything. There's a spell that we threw in just for the humor value that turns things into newts. It's a standard spell. So you have to start thinking—for every object, for every being you create, what happens when you turn it into a newt? You're a wizard in this game and there's someone who would represent the character you played in one of the *Zork* games—a greedy adventurer. You can turn him into a newt. There's a frog here, too and you can talk to him if you discover the spell that allows you to converse with the beasts. But if you try to turn a frog into a newt, it says something like, "Well, he's already an amphibian anyway so..." We take all those into account. Then we have our internal testers play it and some wise guy will say, "Why can't I turn myself into a newt?" This happened. I said, "OK," and incorporated a spell for that. A lot of the anticipation is not anticipation at all. It's observation. You see what other people do and you incorporate the comments that look interesting. If you find something that doesn't work, it hasn't been left out because

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it was too hard to include but because no one thought of it. We've gotten better at anticipating, though and what we miss, well, that's what we have our testers for. For example, early in *Enchanter* there's a brook and you have this jug and you can fill the jug with water from the brook. Later there's an ocean and someone said, "Fill jug," and it didn't understand. And then he said, "Why can I fill it at the brook but not at the ocean?" So I programmed that in, too. But there are all sorts of repercussions from this simple alteration. If you then try to drink the sea water, you don't want the program to come back with the standard, "Mmmm that really quenched my thirst." You want it to say, "Blecch!" and spit the water out. It adds complications. But we feel it has to be consistent and any place there's water you have to be able to fill the jug. We try to make the world as complete as possible.

EF: You learn from your mistakes.

MB: Yes and we're constantly changing the games. People write in and point out inconsistencies and we change them. If you buy a *Zork* now and a year from now, the program could be different. Nothing major. Usually something silly. But the nice thing is that our programs understand you. If they understand the word "wear," they'll understand it if you try to wear something incorrect. They might say, "You're a loony," but they understand. And I think this is what makes the game fun—it's certainly the part that makes them most fun to program. *Deadline* understands the word "arrest" and you can arrest the front door if you want to but Duffy will come in and says something like, "With all due respect sir, there's going to be a lot of talk around the station house if you try to bring in a front door." The point is, it understood.

EF: Leaving out the graphics allows you to do more complex things, right?

MB: Oh sure. We have 110K to work with. *Deadline* has 25,000 words of text in it. It's the size of a novella. It has a lot of very complex interactions in it. If you put in pictures of all those places, the game would play differently. My feeling is that the people are there for the story and the pictures don't really add anything. They're usually cartoonish. And they don't look anything like what you imagine the place to be. When I was a kid I read all of Tolkien's books and then I saw the movie and I said, "That's not the way Gandolf looks? Gandolf doesn't look like that. I know what he looks like and that's not it." Using just text allows players to create their own pictures. An arcade game without graphics doesn't make sense. *Deadline* makes sense without graphics.

EF: One more question... In DEADLINE, who did it?

MB: It looks like everyone did it. Everyone didn't do it.☐

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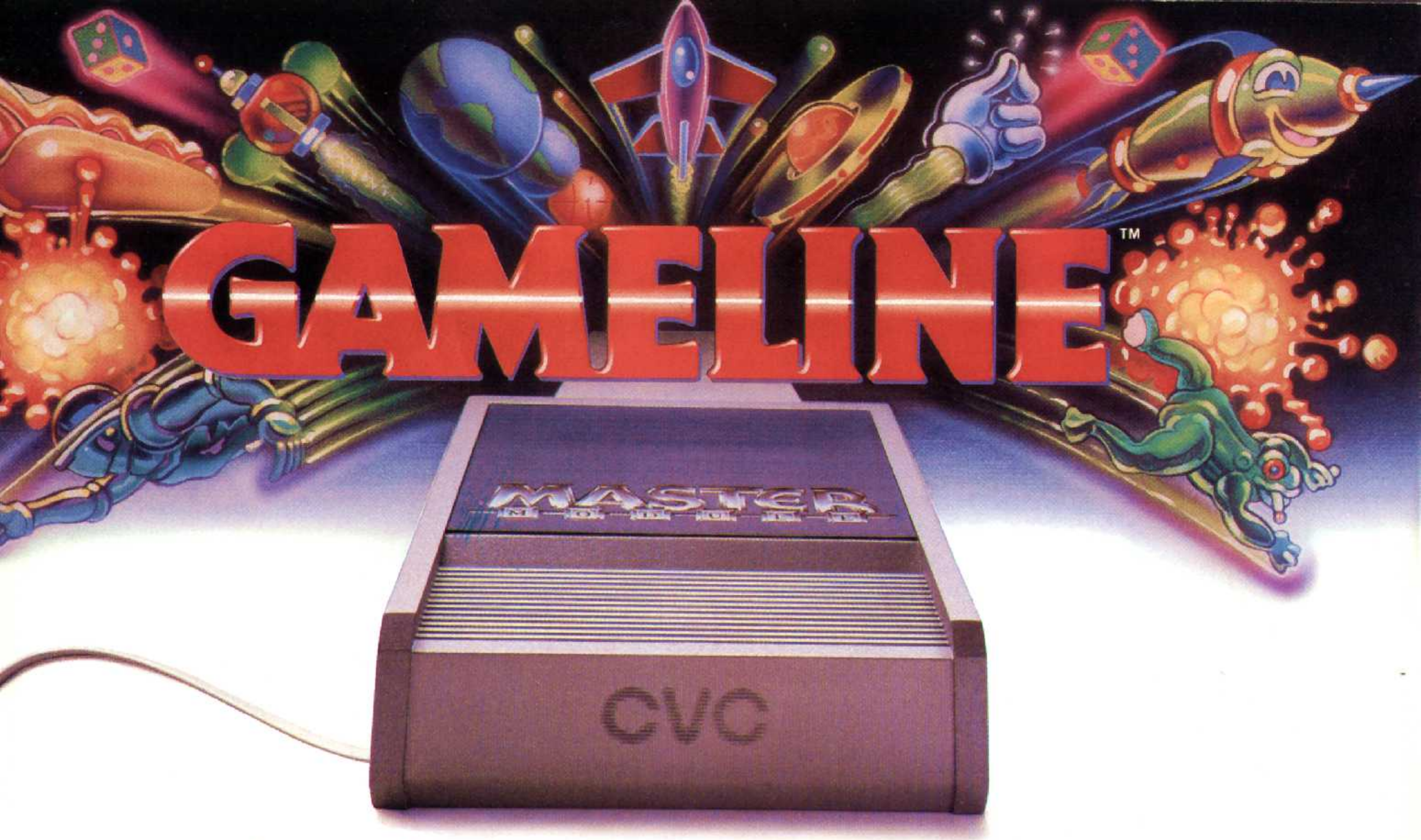

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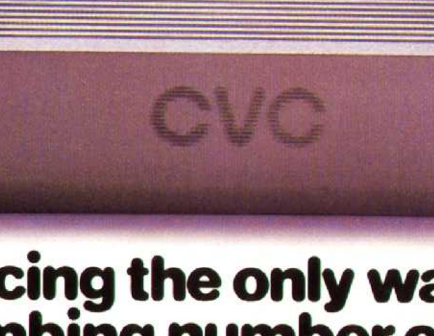

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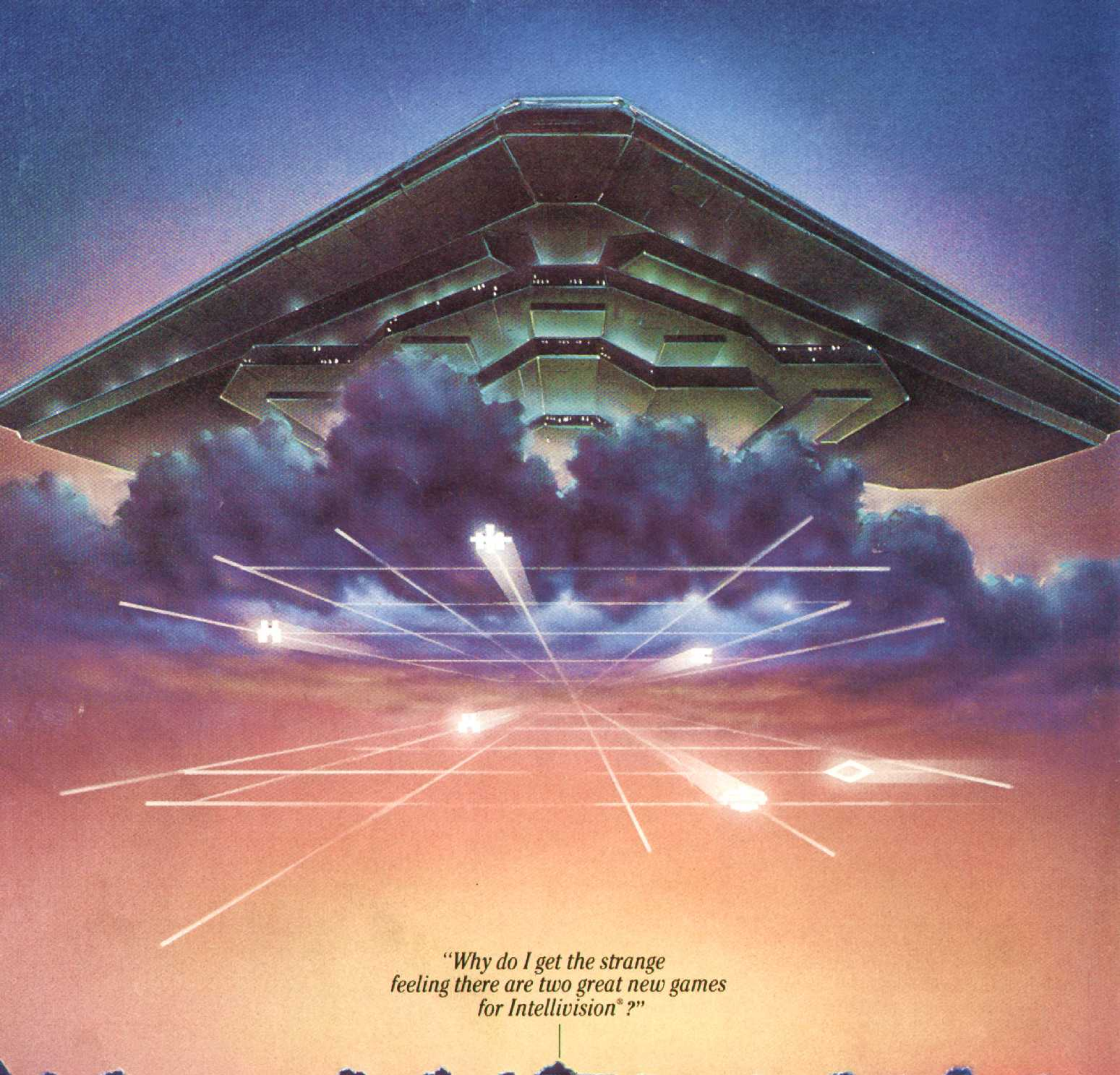
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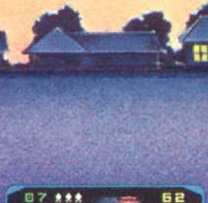

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